DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 104 540 PS 007 767

AUTHOR	Hertz, Thomas W., Ed.; Hertz, Susan, H., Ed.
TITLE	Proceedings of the Conference on Family Research (Washington, D.C., March 4-5, 1974).
INSTITUTION	George Washington Univ., Washington, D.C. Social Research Group.
SPONS AGENCY	Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development, Washington, D.C.; Office of Child Development (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Sep 74
NOTE	129p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 HC-$6.97 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	Agency Role; *Conference Reports; Cultural Pluralism; Ethics; *Family (Sociological Unit); Family Relationship; Family Structure; Life Style; *Models; *Research Criteria; Research Methodology; *Research Needs

ABSTRACT

This document is the product of the Conference of Family Research, a group convened by the Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development to provide an opportunity for researchers to meet with representatives of funding agencies in order to develop new commitments, interests and directions for family research. The document contains the opening remarks of Stanley B. Thomas, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Human Development, HEW, and the keynote address by Dr. Margaret Mead, Curator Emeritus of Ethnology, American Museum of Natural History. The four discussion workshops were taperecorded and outlined in this report in summary form: (1) Workgroup on Family Functioning, (2) Workgroup on Emerging Family Forms and Life Styles; (3) Workgroup on Cultural Pluralism, and (4) Workgroup on Ethics and Family Research. The highlights of these discussions are presented in the section preceding the individual summaries. The appendices contain three tables which identify research questions of interest to specific federal agencies. A listing of the conference participants concludes the report. (CS)

ED104540

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

DEC. 27 1974

DC 373

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE ON FAMILY RESEARCH

Sponsored by the Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development

March 4 and 5, 1974
L'Enfant Plaza Hotel
Washington, D.C.

HEW OSD ASPE NICHD NIMH NINDS SRS BCHS OE OPBE BEH NCIES NIE USDA HUD DOL OMB
THE INTERAGENCY PANEL ON EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

PS 007762

Social Research Group
The George Washington University
Washington, D.C.

September, 1974

00002

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE ON FAMILY RESEARCH

Sponsored by the Interagency Panel on
Early Childhood Research and Development

March 4 and 5, 1974
L'Enfant Plaza Hotel
Washington, D.C.

Edited by:

Thomas W. Hertz, Ph.D.

Susan H. Hertz, Ph.D.

Social Research Group
The George Washington University
Washington, D.C.

The preparation of this publication was performed
pursuant to contract HEW 100-75-0010 with the
Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

September, 1974

60003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS Edith H. Grotberg, Ph.D.	5
KEYNOTE ADDRESS: FEDERAL INTERESTS IN FAMILY RESEARCH Stanley B. Thomas, Jr.	11
KEYNOTE ADDRESS: WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE FAMILY? Margaret Mead, Ph.D.	17
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS	29
WORKGROUP ON FAMILY FUNCTIONING Lois-ellin Datta, Ph.D., Moderator	38
WORKGROUP ON EMERGING FAMILY FORMS AND LIFE STYLES David Pearl, Ph.D., Moderator	56
WORKGROUP ON CULTURAL PLURALISM Rosa Clausell, Ph.D., Moderator	70
WORKGROUP ON ETHICS AND FAMILY RESEARCH Joseph S. Drage, M.D., Moderator	86
APPENDIXES	
A. THE FAMILY: RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCERNS	101
B. PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE ON FAMILY RESEARCH	127

00004

INTRODUCTION

This document is the product of the Conference on Family Research[1], convened by the Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development in Washington, D.C. on March 4 and 5, 1974. The Conference, which was organized by Dr. Edith H. Grotberg, Chairperson of the Panel, brought together national experts in family research, foundation representatives, members of the Interagency Panels[2], and other interested researchers and administrators from the Federal Agencies. Among the many disciplines represented by the participants were psychology, sociology, anthropology, psychiatry, economics, education and pediatrics.

The Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development was organized in 1970, by the Director of the Office of Child Development at the request of the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. The primary mission of the Panel is to promote and facilitate Federal interagency coordination and cooperation in the planning of early childhood research and development. In keeping with this general objective, the aim of the Conference was to provide an opportunity for researchers to meet with representatives of funding agencies in order to develop new commitments, interests and directions for family research.

In order to avoid restricting the nature and scope of the participants' contributions, the Interagency Panel decided that no formal papers other

---

[1]The Conference was supported by a grant from the Office of Child Development, Grant Number OCD CB 107.

[2]Also included among the participants were interested members of the Interagency Panel for Research and Development on Adolescence.

00005

than the keynote addresses would be prepared for or presented at the Conference. After listening to keynote addresses by Dr. Margaret Mead, Curator Emeritus of Ethnology, American Museum of Natural History, and Mr. Stanley B. Thomas, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Human Development, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Conference participants met for informal discussions in smaller workgroups, each of which had as its focal point a broad area of family research. The workgroup discussions, which occurred in two half-day sessions, were tape-recorded and are presented here in summary form. The highlights of these workgroup discussions have been abstracted and are presented in the section preceding the individual summaries. At the conclusion of the Conference the participants reassembled in a plenary session to consider as a group the recommendations and views expressed in the individual workgroups. Remarks made during this general discussion have been incorporated into the summaries of the workgroups to which they relate. In synthesizing and editing these lengthy discussions for this abbreviated record, much of the color and rich detail of the participants' give-and-take was unavoidably omitted. The editors hope that this set of summaries nevertheless manages to convey the essence of the many insights and ideas that were expressed by those who attended the meetings, and that it will be of use as a guide and stimulus for ongoing efforts to plan research on the child and family.

Acknowledgements are due to the following members of the Social Research Group[3], for their help in running the Conference: Maure Hurt, Jr., Project

---

[3] The Social Research Group, of the George Washington University, provides general research and support services for the Interagency Panels.

Director, who supervised and gave scrupulous attention to all aspects of the Conference; Judy Miller, who efficiently organized the schedules, activities, facilities and accommodations for the Conference; and Faye Baumgarner, Gail Hughes, Elisabeth McSpadden, Edward Nelson, Michelle Porte, Tracie Shea, and Annie Sweet, who played a variety of supporting roles during the meetings, including those of recorder, guide, messenger, and troubleshooter. Finally, the editors wish to express their great appreciation and belated sympathy to those persons who had to spend countless hours listening to tape recordings that were sometimes blaring, sometimes fuzzy, and often barely audible, in order to type the excellent, complete transcripts on which these proceedings are based: Lee Connor, Joan Engelhardt, Doris Exum, Regina Knox, Michelle Porte, and Annie Sweet.

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Edith H. Grotberg, Ph.D., Chairperson
Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development

We are here today as a result of a number of activities that have been going on in the Federal Government over the past two years. These activities are converging now and have set the stage for this Conference on Family Research. Let me give you a brief history of what has happened.

The Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development is a Federal Panel comprised of 17 members from four Departments: Health, Education and Welfare; Agriculture; Labor; and Housing and Urban Development. The 17 Agencies of these Departments meet as members of the Panel to increase interagency coordination of research planning and support. The Agencies share information on funded projects and future planning; they attend regular Panel meetings; they request state-of-the-arts documents; and they address special problems and interests that lead to increased coordination of research planning and support.

Two years ago, the Panel wanted to find some theme around which each of the Agencies could formulate research ideas as well as to provide a focus for coordinated activities of the various Agencies. The Family was selected because each agency has within its legislative authorization and mission, the opportunity to address the family in its research efforts. According to the different mandates, the Agencies address the family in different ways and from different perspectives, but each may study the family. With the Panel focusing on the theme of the Family, the member Agencies could work together for greater coordination of research effort and better

00008

utilization of Agency resources. The Family was selected as a particularly important focus for research also because of its critical role in the life of the young child:

(1) the family provides the primary interaction environment and influences the child in his early years;

(2) the family is perceived as the basic and critical social institution for child development;

(3) because of the complexity of the child-parent interactions within the family, the child cannot be served independently of the family; and

(4) parental involvement in child development programs and services may enhance the effectiveness of these programs and services.

The Panel addressed the problem of identifying research questions and efforts pertaining to the Family through Panel discussions and through an interview system. Further, problems of definition of the Family as well as some of the methodological problems inherent in research on the family were discussed. The Panel adopted the following working definition of the family: a family is a social unit which has or may have children. While a family may also be defined as "a social unit in which primary relationships are established and maintained," the definition including the reference to children seemed more appropriate to the Panel.

In terms of methodological problems, the Panel discussions included the following concerns and suggestions:

(1) Studies should be organized and designed to provide for analysis and reanalysis across studies over time.

(2) Studies should be conducted so that the privacy of families is protected.

(3) Longitudinal studies are especially appropriate as a method for family research.

(4) New and improved instrumentation and methodology are needed to cope more effectively with variables and factors, such as:

a. socioeconomic status, but conceptualized as going beyond the traditional income, education, assistance, etc., and reflecting current social perceptions and conditions;

b. family roles with regard to parent/child, parent/parent, parent/society, child/society, and family/society interactions;

c. ethnicity or cultural identity;

d. social forces and intervention procedures.

(5) Theories of family models should focus more on "healthy" families than on the traditional pathological family models.

(6) Research on the family should include methods for the dissemination and utilization of the findings.

Interviews were conducted with each member Agency on the Panel; some interviews were with single representatives of the Agencies while others were conducted with a group from a particular member Agency. During the interviews, the Agency representatives were asked to identify research questions pertaining to the Family which fell within the legislative mandate of their Agency and which already were or might be of interest to the Agency for support consideration. From this activity a statement was written, The Family: Research Considerations and Concerns, and was published in August of 1973. You who are here today received a copy of that statement and it will be appended to the proceedings of this Conference.

Once the statement was published and it was generally known what Agencies could do in terms of family research it became important to do two things: (1) encourage Agencies to make family research a high priority concern; and (2) invite some of the research community in to get their ideas about family research and to address selected areas of family research. The first was accomplished through recommendations sent to all Agency directors and the second is being accomplished by this Conference. The four areas around which this Conference is organized seemed critical areas for the research community to address. As you know from the program, these selected areas are the four workgroups on: (1) emerging family forms and life styles; (2) family functioning; (3) ethics and family research; and (4) cultural pluralism. Clearly, these workgroups overlap in tasks but they seem to provide sufficiently independent issues to merit separation.

You have been assigned to a workgroup, but you should feel free to move around from group to group and to discuss in your workgroup the subject area of another group. The structure we have provided is not binding, it is primarily facilitative. The workgroups will meet this afternoon and tomorrow morning; and then, tomorrow afternoon there will be a report from each workgroup. You will want a chairperson and a recorder for each group as well as someone who is willing to make the report. Each of the workgroup meetings is to be tape recorded and these recordings plus the workgroup reports will comprise the basis of the Proceedings to be published at a later date.

But more will be in the Proceedings because more is going to happen here. We have Margaret Mead as a keynote speaker who will discuss some of the problems and concerns of family research from a long and distinguished career as a researcher. We also have Stanley B. Thomas, Jr., Assistant

Secretary for Human Development, DHEW, as a keynote speaker who will discuss the priorities and concerns of the Federal Government for the Family and Family Research. And Saul R. Rosoff, Acting Director of the Office of Child Development is here to give you further welcome and to introduce our two speakers.

FEDERAL INTERESTS IN FAMILY RESEARCH

Stanley B. Thomas, Jr.
Assistant Secretary for Human Development
Department of Health, Education and Welfare

I am very pleased to see so many of you here this morning to participate in this important Conference. We welcome the dialogue that begins today, which I confidently expect, will determine new directions for research into the American family: its forms and life-styles, its functions, and the effects upon it of the emerging cultural pluralism which is replacing the "melting pot" traditions of an earlier era.

My role here is to assure you the Department is keenly interested in the proposals that will come out of this Conference, and that we intend to take your recommendations seriously. I won't pretend to try to tell you something you don't already know about HEW's efforts in the past to develop models for helping families in distress. The Interagency Panel has already provided us with some significant guidelines through research projects already undertaken, and other researchers, social workers, and administrators around the nation have added to our understanding. Our response has been to develop family assistance programs with three major goals:

1. to assure the subsistence of children and their families;
2. to support the self-sufficiency of families; and
3. to invest in the next generation of adults.

Because we have learned that level of education is related to other statistical indicators of well being, the Department has targeted

00013

many of its programs on increasing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children. Because we have learned that the very development of children from families with special needs is limited or impaired by unfavorable social and economic conditions, we have devised a multitude of categorical cash assistance and service programs to bolster them. And because we know from your research that the first few years of life are extremely critical for the intellectual and physical development of human beings, we have concentrated special efforts on pre-natal and early health care, programs like Head Start and Home Start, and education for parenthood to help young people learn how to "parent." We sought also to provide high school students with the opportunity to learn about communicating with and caring for children, through our demonstration program called "Exploring Childhood." A second phase of this effort is a nationwide demonstration project in which young people participate in child care projects under the sponsorship of seven national voluntary organizations. We have learned also from research that the involvement of the family as an active participant in any intervention efforts on behalf of a child is essential to success. Without such involvement, the effects of intervention are likely to decline as soon as the program ends. In research study after research study, family involvement is clearly the critical factor in assuring continued benefits to children. So we developed the Child and Family Resource Program, which links families to services offered by other community agencies. Its objective: to enhance the strength of family life, the most important influence in the child's life.

As researchers and social scientists, you have told us that there is rarely, if ever, a human situation in which the provision of a

single service will resolve the problem. Human beings are complicated; their needs are multiple--and we have learned that our response, to be effective, must address the whole person, not just the part of him which happens to correspond to our particular program. So we know that health care, nutrition, housing--and many other services--must be included in an effective response to family needs.

Other agencies--particularly the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Housing and Urban Development--have joined with HEW to plan and implement programs which would do this. In many cases, one Department establishes its services where another Department is already operating--and through this joining of forces in a service area, even in a co-location--greatly enhances the effect. A Parent-Child Center or a CFRP may be installed by our Office of Child Development, for example, in a public housing project developed by HUD. Of course, these planning and program activities are further coordinated at the State and local levels.

This recognition of the multiple needs of individuals in need or under stress--and the multiple needs of their family units--has convinced the Department to sponsor in this Congress its Allied Services Act. If this legislative initiative is successful, we will be able to change dramatically the way in which such multiple needs are served, by reducing and perhaps eventually eliminating the categorical approach to the delivery of services which has grown up over the years. I am aware that such an approach can strike a chill into the hearts of many traditionalists who are accustomed to the old ways--and may even have contributed toward the development of the old ways. But if we are going

to be consistent in our response to the insights given us by research, we should be receptive to the new directions in which they lead us.

In closing, let me just say that this Conference symbolizes our dissatisfaction with the way we have been carrying out our responsibilities in the past. If we were satisfied, we wouldn't be seeking new answers and new questions, as well. We need to know a lot more about families, and about what contributes to the successful functioning of the family in society. Our demonstration programs today seem to be well ahead of our research programs--when the opposite should be true. Our service programs today seem to be ahead of both research and demonstration--but the opposite should be true.

I commend the statement of the Interagency Panel on what it sees as the context of future family research. I would like to hear your answers to the questions raised about the various family forms within the U.S.; what contributes to successful family functioning; how the family reacts to such factors as environment and social change; the relationship between families and the social institutions which deal with them; and what policies or actions should government as well as private institutions adopt to support the family and enhance child development.

Give us the answers to such questions, and you will have performed an invaluable service to our professional effectiveness, and to our total society. Through your answers, families throughout this country will be better served, with programs built on the sound foundations of research and demonstration. Give us the answers, and you will contribute to our progress toward achieving the important goals of family

subsistence, family self-sufficiency, and improving the quality of life of future generations. That is a large assignment, and I am pleased and grateful that you have undertaken it.

Thank you.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE FAMILY?

Dr. Margaret Mead[1]
American Museum of Natural History

Dr. Mead began the opening session of the Conference by pointing out that while her early research had focused on technologically primitive families and societies, the main focus of her talk would be on changes that are occurring in our own society. During a wide-ranging discussion with members of the audience, Dr. Mead emphasized the need for dissemination and use of research results, and urged researchers to better acquaint themselves with earlier research and reform efforts in the field of family and child development. Ongoing research projects should be coordinated, research units such as the "family," the "household," and the "community" should be re-examined, and studies should incorporate holistic, general systems approaches, rather than the fractionating, statistic-oriented approaches found in much of the past research. Dr. Mead also outlined several forms that family and marriage might take in the near future.

Coordination and Synthesis of Research

Dr. Mead noted that too often behavioral scientists fail to look into the early history of their research areas, and consequently they continually "rediscover" issues and fail to amplify data and knowledge that already have been generated. For instance, some recent articles and books that for the most part represent good research on the family, have

[1]Dr. Mead's address was tape-recorded; the summary presented here is the editors' synthesis and interpretation of her remarks.

00018

implied that families began to have serious problems only after World War II. A more thorough consideration of earlier research data and analyses, however, would reveal that families have never functioned perfectly, "fulfilling absolutely every human need," and thus the problems apparent today do not necessarily reflect any abrupt deterioration of family functioning.

Early research workers, who were generalists and multidisciplinary, demonstrated a great deal of foresight and laid the groundwork for many of the current trends in research and policy making. For instance, ideas generated by Lawrence K. Frank and B. Ruml when they were at the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Fund in the late 1920's, still constitute useful guidelines for efforts in child research and development. At that time they divided their funds into three primary categories: (1) research in child development; (2) the training of teachers (which today could be amplified to child development workers of every kind); and (3) the creation of a climate of opinion within which reforms could be accomplished in the institutions that deal with the family and the child. Dr. Mead advised that work along these lines still be given high priority and observed that many years ago Dr. Frank urged that the well-being of the family, which he saw as one of the central institutions of American society, be made the touchstone of the functioning of other institutions.

The coordination of research and development work was an issue of great concern to Dr. Mead, who argued that, while agencies have made progress towards the coordination of their activities, research and service programs too often have been designed in such a way that they fractionate the child and the family. The problem is at least twofold. First,

agencies typically have worked independently, each agency dealing with a particular aspect of family life as if it were not interrelated with any of the concerns of other agencies. As a result, the family becomes a focal point of programs and services that are fragmentary, that overlap, or that actually conflict with each other, and even the combined programs fail to meet the family's complex needs and problems. Second, even within an agency one finds practices and procedures that do not support families but actually pull them apart. The typical approach to helping a family with problems has involved the isolation and removal of an individual, or a family, from a problem situation, rather than an attempt to analyze and deal with the particular elements of the ecological system that create or nurture those problems. Evidence of this approach is apparent throughout the history of reforms in child-related services. Policy makers have tended to examine societal institutions in a piecemeal fashion; if the institutions appeared to be doing something harmful to children, the children were simply removed. For example, when it became apparent to many that the regular court system was inappropriate for children, the children were removed from it and the juvenile court was developed. In the same way, young people went into juvenile detention homes rather than prisons, and junior high schools were created when high schools failed to meet the needs of young adolescents coming directly from elementary schools. In too many of these cases, however, the effect of such piecemeal reforms was to leave the malfunctioning institutions in their original form and to transfer the children to institutions that soon proved to have many similar, perhaps even worse, problems and deficiencies. A more recent example of this approach can be seen in the

institutional response to child abuse, where a diagnosis of abuse often leads to the removal of the child, who is placed in a milieu where he is not likely to flourish, while the family is left to abuse another child. Such tactics result in the isolation of children from their families, and of families from their communities.

Mr. Thomas, the Assistant Secretary for Human Development, agreed with much of Dr. Mead's assessment and pointed out that the Office of Human Development is interested in finding alternatives to the institutionalization of children and adolescents, as can be seen in the Child and Family Resource Program. He anticipates a greater degree of involvement with the family by health, education and welfare programs, since in many cases the family appears to be the most viable alternative to institutionalization.

Dr. Mead expressed support for certain projects or proposals that might help to coordinate past, present, and future research on the family: impact statements, co-location of services, and the Interagency Panels. Impact statements, while originally used in the environmental field, have been proposed as a means of determining the effects of research and policy proposals on families and children. According to Dr. Mead, in so far as they pertain to the interrelated effects of diverse policy and program decisions, impact statements may help to integrate fragmented local, state, and federal bureaucracies into a more cohesive system in which agencies will know what other agencies are doing. In much the same way, co-location, wherein departments join forces in particular services areas, should lead to improved communication and cooperation among agencies and programs. Finally, Dr. Mead indicated that the Interagency Panels

provide important services by coordinating research planning, and gathering, synthesizing and disseminating information about child and adolescent research.

Definition of the Research Unit

Dr. Mead noted that agencies are making greater efforts to consider the whole family when making policy and research decisions. Many research and development projects still are oriented toward the "ideal" nuclear family, however, and appear to be based on the assumption that every child in our society ought to be part of a unit of a father, mother and minor children who are living together, with any divergence from this pattern seen as deficient in some respect. Furthermore, according to an all-too-common viewpoint, a healthy family is one which requires the least intervention; consequently autonomy, self-sufficiency, and the isolation of the family are emphasized. A better way of gauging family health and competence, according to Dr. Mead, would involve some measure of the family's integration into the community and its ability to make use of the different resources available to it.

Dr. Mead argued that investigators often choose inappropriate units of research in studying the family, and suggested that the focus of research be shifted from particular family structures to larger units that better represent the context within which families actually function. She recommended that the "household," as the real economic unit of a community, might constitute a better unit of research, while the "family" should continue to be a unit of concern. More attention should also be given to the communities within which households are located, and to the

more dynamic aspects of these environments. While more easily measured factors such as housing and crowding are often examined, it might be more fruitful to consider issues such as whether or not a grandmother lives within walking distance of other family members, or how to mix housing of different economic levels, in order to have multigenerational communities and provide children with the kind of experiences that will make it possible for them to live in a pluralistic society.

Dr. Marvin Sussman pointed out that the selection of appropriate units of research has been one of the basic problems of the social sciences. For example, the family may not be the only unit in a society that performs domestic functions, and a family as a unit that performs domestic functions may be composed of more than one household. The situation is further complicated by the fact that different segments of a society may define the family in different ways; a bank, for example, defines a family differently than the housing authority or the welfare agency.

In reply, Dr. Mead emphasized that she had not meant to imply that the household directly reflected the family, but simply that the household might be a more useful and meaningful unit for research. Dr. Reuben Hill submitted that there is a need to differentiate the research purposes for which the household is the optimum unit. Dr. Mead suggested that the selection of the household as a research unit would be particularly advantageous in research that subsumes a variety of emergent family forms, i.e., forms other than the isolated nuclear family. She pointed out that, historically, Western civilization has seen a wide variety of family systems. During the Middle Ages, for instance, in many places only the eldest son was allowed to marry, and grown, unmarried "children" were

commonly found as members of extended family households. Today, the ready availability of transportation and communication systems, such as the telephone, enables Americans to have close relationships with geographically dispersed kin, and not just with those living within their own community. Researchers and policy makers must stop pulling the family out of its context and designing programs only for the nuclear family. By gearing our efforts towards units such as the household, kinship network, and community, we will more easily encompass within our plans and programs the full range of continually evolving family forms and styles. Dr. Mead described communities and kinship networks as intermediate units between the household and the larger community; she defined the neighborhood as those families and individuals within walking distance of a particular household, and the extended family network as the continually changing body of relatives who maintain close personal ties with a household.

Research Methodology

With regard to research methodology, Dr. Mead discussed a few shifts that have occurred during the history of family research and therapy. One approach to dealing with the family was "invented" by the Farm Security Administration in the 1930's: male workers talked to the father in the barn, while female workers talked to the mother in the house. Another version of this approach was a style in which a male psychiatrist worked with a husband while a female psychiatrist worked with a wife. Researchers and therapists later adopted procedures with which they could deal with the whole family. For example, in one successful Australian project at

North Ryde (near Sydney) discussed by Dr. Mead, the entire family was brought into institutional living for therapy, as an alternative to treating the disturbed family member in isolation.

In much the same way, laboratory research was modified to include the whole family. Families were brought in, given problems to solve, and their interactions were tape-recorded or video-taped; studies such as Jules Henry's Pathways to Madness involved this kind of research procedure. Dr. Mead advocated that family researchers use to an even greater extent general systems approaches in order to describe and analyze the family and its complex interrelations with the household and larger community. Such holistic approaches would help eliminate the fractionation of the family that stems from an over-reliance on research data that is primarily statistical. Dr. Mead maintained that researchers need to reconsider the balance between quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Quantitative, statistical information is necessary for some types of national-level planning, but its uses are limited. For example, statistics can be gathered to determine how many divorced mothers head single-parent families; while the information may be helpful in setting up Social Security rules, it does not tell us much about particular families. As Dr. Julius Rivera emphasized, there is a need for research on the actual processes of family functioning.

Dr. Mead touched on the need for greater commitment to maintaining ethical standards in research and to safeguarding the privacy of the family, especially when participant observation is used. We need to know more about the effects of family research on the researcher. Dr. Mead pointed out that while a body of theory exists in psychiatry, social work

and anthropology that can help the researcher or practitioner deal with problems involved in relating to an individual subject, patient or client, (e.g., how to deal with "transference"), little is known about how to deal with the effects of a whole family on the researcher or practitioner. As Eric Berman shows in his book Scapegoat, it is extremely difficult to study the complex interrelationships of father, mother, and children and still maintain objectivity. Training programs are needed that will prepare research workers for dealing with problems that might arise during intervention or participation in family life.

Members of the audience expressed concern about the difficulties involved in the application of research findings. One participant in the Conference asked Dr. Mead for advice about influencing the policy-making and legislative processes. Referring to her experiences in accustoming the American people to the need for rationing during World War II, Dr. Mead recommended the creation of an appropriate climate of opinion among professionals as a first step in educating the general public and the government about research findings and their implications for social policy. The professionals are the ones who are called in to testify before committes, to help write legislation, and to consult with voluntary groups and lobbyists. It should be remembered, however, that persuading professionals to agree on an issue often means arriving at a certain minimum set of basic guidelines, rather than a complex program.

Dr. David Pearl added an important caveat about the application of research findings to the decision-making process. Administrators must remember that findings that pertain to one area or population may not be valid for another, and that efforts to put findings into effect may even

run counter to the interests of some groups. Before particular policies or programs are put into effect, therefore, attempts should be made to develop a consensus among the individuals and groups involved or affected. Dr. Mead pointed out that the only components of programs that can be worked with successfully on a federal level are those which are common to groups all over the country.

New Directions

Dr. Mead concluded her address with a plea that we move in many new directions--both in formulating research and in reshaping some of the basic institutions in our society. If a truly pluralistic society is to be achieved, Americans must be aware of the different forms that kinship, marriage and child-rearing practices have taken, both historically and cross-culturally.

Dr. Mead proposed that the separation of contractual, dissolvable marriage relationships from non-dissolvable biological (or adoptive) parenthood would be one way to produce a more stable and secure environment for children. In planning new communities, the notion of the ideal, nuclear, isolated family must be abandoned. Room must be made in households and communities for mature adults other than parents, (i.e., elderly people, and single and married people who do not want or have children of their own), in such a way that they too can relate to and interact with children. Adolescents might be provided with places where, if they need to, they can go to get away from their parents and yet still maintain relationships with them--for example, along the lines of the "boys' house" found in some other societies.

Finally, Dr. Mead suggested that the most effective way to make people think sufficiently about the future in order to save the planet from eventual destruction, is to get them to think in terms of a living child that they know. If we provide the social arrangements that permit all adults to be close to children, we may ensure a condition wherein people can think responsibly about the future, and about the changes in our life style that will have to be made if a given, known child is to survive.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

The highlights of the workgroup discussions are presented in this section. For a more detailed account of the issues discussed in the four workgroups, readers are referred to the individual workgroup summaries, presented in the next section. Specific recommendations appear on pages 54, 69, 84 and 99.

As expected, some overlap and convergence were apparent in the comments and ideas expressed in the different workgroups. Family functioning and family structure are closely interrelated, of course, and the topics of cultural pluralism and research ethics are essentially content-free and pertain to research on any aspect of the family.

In each of the groups, a great deal of emphasis was given to the need to develop research methods and theoretical models that would more adequately reflect the complexity, diversity, and variability of behavior and values found both within and across families and cultural or ethnic categories. Conference participants identified a need to develop operational definitions of family functioning that would encompass the complex, multidirectional interactions that occur within the family and between the family and relatives, friends and other significant individuals and institutions. They suggested that researchers should investigate a broader domain of family functioning, in order to include stepparents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other individuals who participate in the day-to-day activities of the family, such as the housekeeper, babysitter, friend and neighbor. The discussants in the Workgroup on Family Functioning and the Workgroup on Cultural Pluralism indicated the need to differentiate the household and the family as research units, pointing out that one may be more appropriate than the

00029

other, depending on the objectives and focus of a particular research project. In both groups the participants stressed the importance of selecting research units that would facilitate the investigation of the many diverse individuals who participate in or affect the functions of the family, and of the full range of family forms and styles that are found in the United States. Discussants in more than one workgroup cautioned social scientists to avoid ethnocentric approaches and inflexible a priori definitions of family forms and functions; they advised instead that the family be conceptualized as a continuum of forms, and that the significant parameters along which family forms vary be identified and incorporated into research paradigms.

High among the Conference participants' priorities was the development of "plus" models of family functioning--models that would focus on the strengths of families or cultural groups rather than on their failures or weaknesses. Researchers and policy makers sometimes assume that families who diverge from stereotypic middle-class values and patterns cannot adequately rear and socialize children. Rather than approach divergent or emergent family forms as problematic or deviant, researchers might more profitably investigate the processes by which individuals and families successfully adapt to a socially and culturally plural context. More attention should be given to exploring multiple, alternative patterns of functioning that may lead to equivalent outcomes in terms of competence in children.

Researchers' biases are often reflected in their measurements of competence and adequacy. Some participants observed that while investigators often apply their own standards of success to their target groups, "functional"

and "dysfunctional" are actually relative concepts. A mode of functioning that is adaptive for one family may not be for another. The researcher should try to take into consideration the reference points of the families or individuals under investigation, especially when those individuals have a social or cultural background that is distinctly different from that of the researcher. More flexible methods for gauging adequacy, for instance in terms of the self-actualization of the individual family member, should be developed.

Deficit models also have been used extensively in research on major changes in family structure, due to, for instance, death or divorce. Attention might be shifted from specific deficits produced by disruptions of family life to the processes of coping and adaptation that follow changes in structure. How are roles reallocated, reorganized or expanded to deal with new situations? How does the family solicit and obtain support and resources from relatives, friends and institutions in the community?

Studies on father absence reflect the deficit approach to research on structural changes, and often have been guided by the assumption that the father's absence could not be compensated for by other family members, and was necessarily detrimental to the child's social and cognitive development. Discussants stressed the need for research on single-parent families that focuses on the particular patterns of functioning that lead to optimal development, and pointed out that single parents and their children do not necessarily have negative self-images or see themselves as in need of special remedial services.

Some discussants argued that in applying a narrow operational definition to family functioning, the researcher ignores the many distinctly

different processes that are involved in family life. They urged that the focus of research be expanded to include a wider cross section of: (1) basic family functions, such as those related to child care, breadwinning, housekeeping, and marriage; (2) modes of interaction, including violence and aggression; and (3) family roles, especially those that are undergoing radical changes in many families, such as the male's role, the female's role, and the adolescent's role.

A theme common to the workgroup discussions was that research efforts have for the most part failed to tap into significant and integral aspects of family and child development. Although specific research strategies or designs were not discussed, a variety of related recommendations and ideas were advanced. Support was expressed generally for "systems approaches" to family research--holistic research designs that focus on <u>total</u> family functioning and on the interrelations and interdependence of the primary systems that bear on family functioning. Rather than restrict their observations and experiments to dyadic interactions, researchers might also deal with larger social systems. Greater consideration should be given to the ecological systems within which the family functions--to the interfaces between the family and the physical and social environments, the surrounding neighborhood and community, and the resources and institutions that are available to the family. Statistical, quantitative methods could be augmented by more qualitative assessments of family life, (e.g., participant observation) especially with regard to emerging family forms and cultural and ethnic groups. Many discussants stressed the value of developmental studies of family functioning, pointing out that the needs and dynamics of the family change significantly as the members grow older. The use of

longitudinal designs was discussed extensively, with most attention given to the problem of insuring commitment and continuity on the parts of both the funding agencies and the researchers.

Along the same lines, participants in several of the workgroups called for greater communication, coordination and collaboration across disciplines and agencies. Interdisciplinary and multiethnic research teams were seen as providing one answer to the problem of ethnocentric approaches to research, and as being prerequisites for multifaceted ecological studies. Discussants in the Workgroup on Family Functioning stressed the need to evaluate, codify and synthesize the particularistic schemes that are generated in the many disciplines and fields of family research. Furthermore, participants urged that steps be taken to increase the comparability of the concepts, methods and variables used in family research.

A general need for research and work on methodology was identified. According to some participants, the many measurement, observation, and interview techniques used in family research should be evaluated systematically in large-scale methodological studies. How do the various methods compare, and how do they hold up across different social and cultural settings? Currently available techniques of data collection and analysis are inappropriate or inadequate for complex, multiple-variable ecological or longitudinal research projects.

In each of the workgroups, consideration was given to some aspect of the process of applying, implementing and disseminating research findings. Participants concluded that for a variety of reasons much of the information generated by scientific studies failed to reach the public and professional communities, and even, in some cases, appropriate government agencies.

Existing channels of communication and dissemination need to be improved and new methods need to be developed. Among the priorities identified by the discussants were the following: (1) devise methods not only to disseminate information, but also to enable families to use that information; (2) increase the emphasis placed on the evaluation of implementation and dissemination programs; (3) assess the impact of implementation activities on the agents of the programs as well as on the recipients; (4) determine which dissemination or implementation techniques actually result in behavior change; and (5) encourage and support more extensive replication efforts as an antecedent to massive dissemination and implementation programs. Discussants in the Workgroup on Cultural Pluralism raised a series of questions with regard to the government's role in the dissemination of cultural pluralism approaches: (1) What is the degree and nature of the government's commitment to a cultural pluralism approach? (2) How can the government support the idea of a plurality of cultures within American society? (3) How can federal agencies help families function in a plural social system? and (4) How can the federal government, through policy and research, make cultural pluralism an issue of concern for the dominant groups? The discussants recommended a major conference on ethnicity as a first step in promoting discussion of cultural pluralism.

Participants in all of the workgroups commented on the need for high ethical standards in research. Many discussants stressed that the confidence and privacy of the family should be respected and protected by all researchers and practitioners, and especially by those who observe and participate in activities within the home. A second concern that was expressed frequently pertained to research on families and groups with varied cultural,

ethnic and economic backgrounds. Discussants pointed out that researchers need to be more sensitive to cultural and ethnic differences, and more objective when investigating families who do not share the researcher's background. The use of deficit models in research is seen as an ethical issue as well as a scientific one. Community input was frequently cited as one means of insuring fairer and more objective representation of the values and behaviors of the people participating in the research.

Discussants in the Workgroup on Ethics and Family Research pointed to the apparent inevitability of increased governmental regulations of research activities. While there was general agreement that the research community had in many respects failed thus far to regulate itself, at the same time discussants felt that inflexible legislated restrictions would not solve problems related to unethical research. Regulations being considered at the time by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and by Congress, were criticized as too rigid to be applied to research across diverse scientific fields and disciplines, each of which has its own complex, peculiar methodological and theoretical problems. Many participants warned that the legislation of ethical guidelines might even reduce the researcher's sensitivity to moral and ethical issues.

The issue of obtaining informed consent from research participants also received considerable attention in the workgroup discussions. The discussants endorsed the general principle, but raised questions about the amount and nature of information that should be given to research subjects. Subjects should be given sufficient information so that they understand the implications and risks of the research treatment or intervention, and so that they genuinely understand their right to refuse to participate in

research. At the same time, general guidelines rather than specific regulations should be formulated, which might vary according to how obtrusive or manipulative the research is. Strategies must be devised so that truly informed consent can be obtained without jeopardizing the experimental design.

Along the same lines, discussants emphasized the need for follow-up efforts to determine the effects on the family of research treatments or interventions, and if necessary, to provide the appropriate counseling or professional aid.

The researcher's relationship with the government also came under the scrutiny of the Workgroup on Ethics and Family Research. Discussants expressed opposition to attempts by the government to suppress or alter research findings, or to avoid decisions or action by funding unnecessary research. Some discussants suggested that historical studies be undertaken to trace and analyze the long-term impact of the flow of government money into a research area. The establishment of a broad-based scientific institute that might work in conjunction with Congress was recommended as a step toward coordinating government sponsored research.

The participants urged that efforts be made to reform the basic system that supports abuses of research ethics, and advised the expansion of educational activities aimed at communicating to the public the purposes and methods of research. A face-to-face dialogue among representatives of the research community, the general public, and government agencies was recommended as part of a continual review of ethical issues and regulations.

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

00037

WORKGROUP ON FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Participants in the Workgroup

Lois-ellin Datta, Moderator
National Institute of Education

Robert Boger, Michigan State University

Madeline G. Dowling, Social and Rehabilitation Service

D. Bruce Gardner, Colorado State University

Richard J. Gelles, University of Rhode Island

Thomas W. Hertz, George Washington University

E. Mavis Hetherington, University of Virginia

Reuben Hill, University of Minnesota

Lucie G. Krassa, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Esther Kresh, Office of Child Development

W. Stanley Kruger, Office of Education

Mary Lystad, National Institute of Mental Health

Donald Melcer, Michigan State University

Julie Phillips, National Institute of Mental Health

I. Barry Pless, University of Rochester

Carol Richards, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Mary E. Robinson, Office of Child Development

Guy O. Seymour, Boston City Hospital

Heidi Sigal, Foundation for Child Development

Vivien Stewart, Carnegie Corporation of New York

Alice Stubbs, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Deborah K. Walker, Office of the Secretary, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

00038

WORKGROUP ON FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Summary of the Discussion

Primary topics considered by the workgroup participants included: (1) systems approaches to research on the family; (2) definitions and conceptualizations of family functioning; (3) the relationship between family structure and family functioning; and (4) significant aspects of the research process such as methodology and dissemination of research findings.

Systems Approaches

In terms of specific research recommendations, the ideas that emerged during the discussions were diverse and in a few cases even conflicting. In terms of general perspectives of research on family functioning, however, the congruity of the participants' ideas was more striking than the diversity. Virtually all of the members of the group appeared to be sympathetic toward some general trends that in recent years have become increasingly evident in family research. While these trends do not necessarily reflect a single conceptual framework, they represent approaches to theory and research that are complementary in many respects.

Much of the socialization and development of the young child occurs within the domain of the family. In research on child development, however, the family often has been depicted as if it constituted a narrowly bounded, unchanging environment and as if it possessed a set of permanent traits and values. Inherent in this approach is a diminution of the complex and dynamic processes that are involved in family behavior. In order to understand the family as a factor in child development, it is necessary to go beyond

00039

static measures and to analyze the ways in which a family actually functions, both internally and in relation to larger ecological systems.

Whereas there used to be a preponderance of atomistic models in the social sciences that were basically behavioristic, mechanistic and non-developmental, researchers have shown more interest in global models that are, among other things, interactionist, ecological and developmental. Previous attempts to understand the family's role in child development were heavily oriented toward unidirectional cause-and-effect interpretations, with the child portrayed as an essentially passive organism whose behavior was determined for the most part by external stimuli and by the people, especially the parents, who controlled those stimuli. The child's reciprocal impact on the family has come under greater scrutiny, however, as investigators have concerned themselves with the full range of multidirectional relationships and interactions that occur within the family system. Furthermore, more attention has been given to individual differences in children, including those related to temperamental characteristics that may be biologically determined in part and emerge quite early in childhood and infancy.

The viewpoints of many of the participants reflected a general orientation to family research that might be characterized most aptly as a "systems approach." The systems approach was not discussed in the context of any one particular field, such as sociology, but was seen to be valid for a wide range of research interests. While they did not delineate specific research strategies, the participants agreed that a high priority should be the development of theoretical models of total family functioning--models that represent the interrelations and interdependence of the systems (both internal to and external to the household) that bear on family functioning.

09040

Analyses of isolated aspects of family behavior or of component dyads should be supplanted by more holistic studies that focus on the family as an integral whole embedded within still larger systems. Too often researchers and practitioners look for the impact of factors or treatments within a limited scope of family behavior and do not concern themselves with the interfaces between these behaviors and other important systems of functioning; yet the effects of an intervention in one domain of family functioning (e.g., interpersonal relationships) may affect or be tempered by developments in another domain (e.g., economic).

Most theories and hypotheses about family functioning have been molecular and fragmentary, and have been conceptualized within the confines of relatively independent fields and disciplines such as sociology, developmental psychology, health and economics. There is a need to evaluate and synthesize where possible the particularistic conceptual schemes that have proliferated and to integrate the many divergent lines of research on family-related issues. Greater communication and collaboration across disciplines within the various social, behavioral and medical sciences are prerequisites, of course, for any efforts both to codify ideas and approaches and to undertake the kinds of multifaceted research projects outlined above. Accordingly, the discussants strongly recommended encouragement and support for interdisciplinary work, especially as an auxiliary to large-scale systemic research projects.

Defining Family Functioning

A substantial portion of the discussion was devoted to the issue of defining family functioning. As investigators adopt more systemic approaches to research on the family, they similarly must develop operational definitions

of family functioning that better reflect the complex, multidirectional interactions that occur both within the family and between family members and relatives, friends and other significant individuals and institutions. The participants suggested that research studies have often contained implicit or explicit definitions of family functioning that are inadequate in several key respects.

The domain of family functioning constitutes one problem area for investigators. In many cases, research has focused on the nuclear family, and often on a single dyad within the nuclear family. Relatively little systematic research has been directed toward stepparents, grandparents and aunts and uncles; in even fewer studies have investigators examined the roles of the housekeeper, babysitter, friend, and neighbor. The scope of research must be expanded to include the many diverse persons and institutions that are actively involved in the day-to-day life of the family. In this respect, the household may be a more appropriate unit of research than the family. With the focus on the general household and its manifold functions, purposes and linkages, investigators are more likely to incorporate into their research paradigms the full range of ecological systems that impact on the family and the child--systems that must be considered if the socialization and development of the child are to be understood fully. On the other hand, the term "household" should not be interpreted in a literal physical sense, such that the research focus is restricted to only those persons who move within or come into close physical proximity with the actual household. Some individuals who live outside of the household nevertheless influence and are influenced by the functioning of the household (e.g., grandparents who live in other neighborhoods or cities, and parents who live elsewhere because of divorce or separation).

In a similar vein, some participants argued that in much of the research literature, family functioning is treated as if it were an amorphous entity, with no real effort made to differentiate or include the many distinct sub-functions of the family. Typically, investigators assess only one or a few closely related aspects of the family's activities. Discussants advised that measures be diversified to include a wider range of family functions, such as those related to child care, breadwinning, housekeeping, and marriage. The point was made that spousal relationships in particular have received insufficient attention relative to parent-child and sibling relationships, even though a breakdown in family functioning may be reflected by a deterioration in marital relationships long before child care is affected. With regard to interaction patterns in families, a wider array of behaviors needs to be measured, one person argued, in order to include modes of interaction, such as violence, aggression and coercion, which typically have been ignored by researchers even though they clearly can be integral components of family functioning.

According to the group participants, researchers and social policy makers often operate as if there were only one pattern of functioning that is optimal for the development of the child and the other family members. Just as there are many functions within the family system, however, so also are there many different patterns of functioning. For instance, divergent pathways of family functioning may lead to equivalent outcomes in terms of competence in children. The discussants were in complete agreement that investigators and practitioners should develop multiple models of family development, rather than try to impose unitary, tidy models on "untidy" families.

00043

Much of the discussion about family functioning concerned the issue of reference points. The investigator or practitioner commonly designs research or treatment according to a particular preconceived notion of adequacy in family functioning. Function and dysfunction in family life might better be dealt with as relative concepts, however, since a mode of functioning that is maladaptive for one family or in one situation may be quite adaptive for another family or in another social or cultural setting. Actions that might be characterized as dysfunctional in terms of criteria established by a researcher actually may be functional in terms of the purposes or needs of a particular family or particular members of a family. Some discussants suggested that the problem of imposing a single notion of competence on families with different backgrounds and needs might be circumvented by gauging the family's adequacy in terms of the self-actualization of its individual members. That is, does a family function in such a way that it facilitates the development of the individuals in the direction of their full potential? Of course, there is still a need to consider different reference points, only now in regard to the self-actualization of individuals. Furthermore, a pattern of functioning that supports the development of one member of the family may actually impede the development of other members. Despite such difficulties, this general approach deserves more consideration, in the opinion of several of the discussants, especially in light of growing emphasis on the family's responsibilities to protect the individual rights of its members, shown in the literature on such issues as child abuse, parenting skills, and old people's rights.

00044

Structure and Functioning

Orientations toward family and child research that have been popular in recent years, such as systems and ecological approaches, represent a move away from models that explain family functioning primarily in terms of direct consequences or outcomes of either internal or external conditions. Within more recent theoretical schemes the emphasis is not on the environment per se, or on the family per se, but on the interaction between the environment and the family; family functioning is investigated as an active, adaptive process.

When a major change occurs naturally either in the environment or in the structure of the family, the researcher is afforded an excellent opportunity to observe the processes of family functioning as they are reorganized to cope with new circumstances. Many of the discussants stressed the need for more research on the relationship between changes in family structure and family functioning, and urged that such research be undertaken at a higher level of complexity than typically has been the case, in order to investigate a much wider range of family and environmental factors in combination. There has been a surfeit of narrowly focused research projects designed to measure the effects of a change in the structure of the family on some specific ability or status of the child. An a priori hypothesis of many of these studies has been that certain changes in the composition of the family (e.g., father absence) will disrupt family functioning in a standard way and necessarily lead to deficits in various aspects of the child's development. In contrast, in very few studies have researchers looked directly at the ways in which family systems and external social systems actually reorganize and accommodate (successfully as well as

unsuccessfully) to such changes in the form of the family.

Accordingly, some participants of the discussion group suggested that attention be turned from specific deficits precipitated by alterations in family functioning to the processes of adaptation that follow these changes. For instance, how do family members adapt to changes produced by death, divorce, illness, handicaps, or the introduction of a grandparent or new baby into the household? Under stress, how does the family reorganize its coping methods? How are the roles of family members reallocated and what new roles must members assume? One discussant suggested that studies of handicapped children and their families would provide especially good models for this kind of research. Not only do handicapped children constitute a large proportion of the childhood population, but also they have a salient impact on family functioning and the family members' reciprocal responses are crucial to the handicapped child's development.

The participants also underscored the need to investigate internal changes in the family system during periods of change or stress in relation to responses of external systems. In what ways does the family solicit and obtain aid from outside individuals and institutions? How are resources outside the household used to cope with stressful situations? What kinds of support from the extended family and from community networks are forthcoming in different, contrasting change situations (e.g., divorce as compared to the death of a parent)?

Much of the existing knowledge about the impact of father absence stems from studies of deficits in the child's development, particularly in the domains of achievement and personality. Implicit in such research approaches is the assumption that the disappearance of the father produces a void in family functioning that cannot be completely filled or compensated

for by others. The discussants stressed the need for more research on single-parent families that focuses on the differences between those patterns of functioning that lead to deficits and those that lead to adequate or optimal development in the child. The point was made that single-parent families are not necessarily burdened by negative self-images; a parent may decide that rearing his or her children alone is the most feasible and healthy option available. An unintended effect of research or service programs oriented toward motherless or fatherless children may be to actually instill negative self-concepts in children who are well adjusted to begin with.

Many other issues related to the reorganization of family functioning have received disproportionately small amounts of attention from researchers. Even though an increasingly large number of children have stepparents, very little research has been undertaken on the assimilation of the stepparent into the family system. Do parents and stepparents differ in the way in which they interact with the children in the family? What family roles are open to stepparents and which ones are most beneficial to the development of the child? How do stepsiblings relate and adjust to each other?

In one respect, the processes of family reorganization that accompany or follow divorce and remarriage may be especially appropriate for systematic investigation. In many cases the relatively short time frameworks involved in the cycle of marriage, child bearing, divorce and remarriage would make feasible longitudinal studies that might yield valuable information about the impact of major structural changes on patterns of family functioning.

The discussants made the point that research on family functioning also needs to be expanded in scope to include a variety of changes in the structure

and circumstances of the family that may not be as dramatic or as disruptive as divorce, remarriage or death. For instance, we still lack an adequate understanding of the ramifications of occupational commitments and involvement on family functioning. How do the mother's roles in the family change when she begins to work, and how do the other members of the family adapt to these changes?

All families must face constantly changing constellations of needs, functions and roles as the family members grow older. Some families that function quite smoothly when the children are young may adapt poorly to the changes in attitudes, behaviors and demands that occur as the children mature. Developmental issues are not only intrinsically interesting, they also are inseparable from most aspects of family functioning; yet in only a relatively small number of research projects have such issues been examined directly or taken into consideration as contributing factors.

Although the discussants concentrated on issues pertaining to the structure of the family, they made it clear that research questions concerning transactions between the family and the community and society also deserved serious consideration. One person suggested that an area in need of increased research concerns problems resulting from the physical and social isolation of families; we need to learn more about the causes of such isolation and its impact on the family's decision-making and coping processes. Several discussants identified a need for studies on family mobility, pointing out that families in the United States move more frequently than ever for a variety of reasons. In investigating the impact of mobility on family functioning, it may be fruitful to differentiate positively motivated moves (e.g., resulting from a job opportunity) from moves precipitated by crises.

When families move from one location to another, how do they compensate for the sudden loss of contact with relatives, friends and community resources? What are the effects of mobility on marital relationships? Given frequent relocation, the values and standards of the family are often not synonymous with those of the new community or surrounding institutions. There is a need for more research on the adaptation of the family to these external value systems.

The Research Process

In line with the group's interest in codification and integration of concepts, a recommendation for methodological research was strongly endorsed. The discussants urged a systematic evaluation of the procedures and data collection techniques used in the many areas of family research and an examination of measurement characteristics under different settings. In order to establish reliable and valid measures and procedures for family research, large-scale methodological studies should be funded in which the principal methods can be compared both within and across families and situations. For instance, how do observation and interview methods compare? How do specific measures hold up across different social and cultural settings? How does the race or sex of the interviewer or observer influence the measures across a variety of situations? Even though it is common practice in family studies to assign a male interviewer to the father, and a female interviewer to the mother, the actual effects of this procedure are not fully understood.

Present methodology may not be adequate for systems and ecological approaches to research on the family; techniques of data collection and analysis must be refined in order to handle the more complex research

questions posed in such studies.

Greater support for longitudinal approaches to family research was urged by some of the participants, who emphasized that lengthy, even intergenerational time spans may separate input and outcome variables in family and child development. In the discussion of longitudinal research that ensued, many of the questions that surfaced involved procedural problems. How can researchers be expected to initiate long-term research studies without adequate long-term commitment from funding agencies? How can the continuity of the research team be ensured? How is the ultimate value of the research affected by significant shifts that may occur in family lifestyles and forms during the course of the study? How can variables be defined at the outset of the study so as to permit the later incorporation of new approaches and assessment strategies while retaining the essence of the original objectives?

The concern was expressed that we lack the analytic models and statistical techniques necessary for longitudinal studies aimed at complex interactional questions that involve changes over time in family structure and functioning. One discussant suggested that the appropriate techniques will not be developed until more commitment is given to longitudinal research and until good longitudinal data becomes available. On the other hand, many longitudinal data banks are already available to investigators. Would it be better to fund new longitudinal studies in family development or to fund efforts to improve methodological techniques in order to analyze existing data bases? Regardless of their particular viewpoints, most of the participants agreed that serious consideration should be given to the many questions that bear on longitudinal research. As one discussant warned,

the potential value of longitudinal research should not be downgraded simply because the procedures involved are costly and difficult.

Do research efforts lag behind or limit efforts to provide services and support for families and children? Not always, according to several discussants, who concluded that extant research findings are not always being effectively applied to social policy. One participant warned of a growing separation between what is known in the research literature and what is being put into effect toward the solution of social problems. A lengthy discussion followed, during which a recommendation for increased research on methods of disseminating and implementing research findings was endorsed by the group.

What measures must be taken to ensure that information generated by significant research programs is made available to those persons or institutions that can benefit from it? How can dissemination channels not already existing be improved and what new systems are needed? Should a period of dissemination be funded at the end of every research project? (One participant objected to this suggestion, pointing out that a built-in dissemination component would not allow time for other researchers and policy makers to review or replicate the research and to determine the validity and significance of the findings before they are disseminated to non-researchers.)

Better methods must be devised not only to make available research information, but also to enable families to use that information. Several people criticized the use of the traditional "medical" model in family-oriented information and support services, which forces a family to identify itself in a time of crisis or critical need; often information and aid from outside agencies are needed and would do more good long before the family

reaches this point. On the other hand, more aggressive intervention-oriented programs need to be thought out very carefully, with high priority given to ethical considerations.

The discussants advocated increased emphasis on the evaluation of implementation and dissemination programs. Not surprisingly, actual implementation efforts may show little resemblance to the ideal or model programs as originally envisioned by researchers or agencies. The group urged improved assessment of the impact of implementation activities on the agents of the programs as well as on the recipients. How do the agents actually carry out programs, and how are their efforts affected or altered by the responses of the families with whom they deal? Furthermore, the successful communication of information does not necessarily lead to behavior change or to the particular changes that were anticipated. There is a need to determine which dissemination and implementation techniques actually result in behavior change. How should behavior change be measured, and from whose reference points? Some people argued that the recipient's point of view as well as that of the practitioner or program staff should be considered when trying to gauge the impact of a particular program. Some members of the discussion group stressed the need for studies of the dynamics of behavior change at the level of agencies, institutions and professional groups, pointing out that practitioners, for example, often fail to change professional procedures even when research findings clearly indicate that such changes are warranted.

Certain methods of dissemination may be appropriate for one group of people or one setting, but not for another. The point was made, for instance, that USDA Extension Service programs that worked well with middle-class rural

people turned out to be less effective with other groups, and were redesigned accordingly. Multiple modes of dissemination should be developed in order to most effectively reach families with different social and cultural backgrounds, lifestyles and needs.

Finally, the discussants agreed that replication studies, even though vital to the research and development process, are virtually nonexistent; research findings are often disseminated on a large-scale basis without adequate measures to determine their validity or reliability. The group urged that resources be reallocated so as to promote more extensive replication efforts.

Specific Recommendations of the Workgroup on Family Functioning

1. Efforts should be made to evaluate, codify and synthesize the many particularistic conceptual schemes that concern family functioning.

2. There is a need for theoretical models of total family functioning, and for systems and ecological approaches to family issues.

3. Cooperation and collaboration between researchers in the behavioral, social and medical scientific disciplines should be encouraged in order to facilitate the development of more holistic, comprehensive research approaches.

4. More research should be directed at the full range of individuals who participate in the functioning of the family and household, including stepparents, grandparents, relatives, friends, housekeepers, babysitters and neighbors.

5. Researchers and social policy makers should be aware of and look for multiple pathways of family functioning that may lead to equivalent outcomes in the development of children and other family members.

6. Function and dysfunction should be treated as relative notions; in assessing the adequacy of a mode of functioning, researchers should consider the reference points of the families and individuals involved.

7. More process-oriented research should be undertaken to investigate the adaptation of family functioning to significant changes in the structure of the family or in the environment.

8. Researchers, practitioners, policy makers and funding agencies should develop clearer guidelines for the support, implementation and application of major longitudinal research projects.

9. Reliable and valid measures and procedures must be determined for family research; large-scale studies on methodology should be supported in order to examine the characteristics of the many measures and data collection techniques, under diverse social and cultural settings.

10. Techniques of data collection and analysis should be refined if they are to be applicable to research problems that involve multiple, interrelated systems of family functioning and more complex patterns of social interaction.

11. Research is needed on the processess of disseminating and implementing research findings at all levels of public, professional and government sectors.

12. More replication studies should be encouraged and supported; greater effort should be made to determine the validity and reliability of research findings prior to the initiation of wide-scale dissemination and implementation programs.

WORKGROUP ON EMERGING FAMILY FORMS AND LIFE STYLES

Participants in the Workgroup

David Pearl, Moderator
National Institute of Mental Health

May Aaronson, National Institute of Mental Health

Barbara Bates, Office of Child Development

Susan Berresford, Ford Foundation

Joseph M. Bobbitt, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Stephen R. Bollman, Kansas State University

Harold T. Christensen, Purdue University

Sigmund Dragastin, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Bernice T. Eiduson, University of California at Los Angeles

Nancy Graham, National Urban Coalition

Adele Harrell, George Washington University

Mary C. Howell, Harvard University

Anita S. King, National Institute of Mental Health

Carl G. Lauterbach, Marywood College

Robert McGee, Office of Youth Development

Carol McHale, George Washington University

Leigh Minturn, University of Colorado

Beatrice Paolucci, Michigan State University

John Pride, Special Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Development

Betty Rasmussen, Office of Education

Duane Ragan, Office of Child Development

Alice Y. Scates, Office of Education

Patsy Sampson, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Marion R. Yarrow, National Institutes of Health

00055

WORKGROUP ON EMERGING FAMILY FORMS AND LIFE STYLES

Summary of the Discussion

During the discussion, participants focused on several key topics: (1) the definition of the research area; (2) the development of appropriate research methods and approaches; and (3) problems of dissemination and utilization, including ethical and policy-making implications of research on emergent family forms.

Definition of the Research Area

At the beginning of the discussion of emerging family forms and life-styles, the question was asked, "Why study 'emergent' or 'alternative' family forms at all?" Participants pointed out that the family is still the major socializing vehicle, although its roles and functions are changing, as is the case with other traditional institutions in America today. Whereas in the last fifty years developmental research has concentrated on the nuclear family, participants agreed that it was now time for the discipline to begin to look at other kinds of child-rearing patterns in America. The adoption, in the last decade, of many new varieties of family forms by people reared according to traditional middle class values, was characterized as an attempt to re-emphasize kinship and the family as the primary group within which to work, learn, and raise children. During the workgroup sessions the discussants often drew on their knowledge of communes and large-group family forms to illustrate their points and ideas. At the same time, it was made clear that the issues and recommendations considered by the group in general pertained to all kinds of emergent family forms and

00056

lifestyles, including single-parent families and nuclear families in which innovative roles and relationships are adopted.

Although the workgroup's primary interest was in the relation of family form and lifestyle to the growth of the child, the issue of the motivation behind alternative lifestyles was also considered. What prompts people to reject one way of life and adopt another? What is the source of their differences with the larger society? Do they develop alternative family forms out of necessity? Are they prompted primarly by dissatisfaction? Is it simply exploratory behavior? Several discussants had carried out extensive research on alternative lifestyles, such as counter-culture communes or more traditional religious communities, and they pointed out that motivation not only varies from group to group, but also among the individuals in any one group. The original motivation for joining a group practicing unorthodox child-rearing, family, or marriage practices may involve a variety of reasons, including religious reasons, ecological reasons (such as a desire to conserve resources or for economic cooperation), or ideological reasons. Discussants indicated that generally those who practice alternative lifestyles are extremely conscious of alienation from the larger society.

Research on communes indicates that motivation often changes as the individual participates in group activities and is assimilated into the social structure. Discussants concluded that the original motivation of family group members was not as important a factor in the long-term maintenance of the groups as other factors studied by social scientists, which include the presence or absence of a hierarchical structure in the group, and the degree of ideological commitment.

00057

The discussants advised that researchers and policy-makers not define emergent family forms as problematic or deviant. It was pointed out that such an approach is based on the questionable assumption that divergence from mainstream, middle-class family patterns is inadequate or unhealthy for rearing children. On the contrary, such family forms may very well have advantages and strengths that the nuclear family does not.

The connotations of the two terms, "alternative" and "emergent" were considered. One person pointed out that, for the general public, "alternative" may imply deviation, and the discussants agreed that it might be better to describe family forms other than the traditional, nuclear family as "emergent." This description would stress the creative aspect of such family forms and their role in a more widespread process of social innovation.

Workgroup participants emphasized the need for research to proceed on the basis of as few assumptions and a priori definitions as possible. Participants pointed out that it is inappropriate to treat nuclear and emergent family forms as if they were dichotomous; recent research suggests that an impressive amount of variation exists within the "traditional" nuclear family (even the number of siblings appears to have an important effect on child-rearing practices and parent-child interaction). It may be more accurate to conceptualize family form as a continuum of forms--with the idealized nuclear family at one end, for instance.

Several family forms were discussed at length by workgroup members who had done research on religious communities, counter-culture groups, group marriages, and single-parent families. Of particular interest to these researchers was the appearance of a gap between ideal and real intentions

and behavior. One participant pointed out that although stated values and ideals of child-rearing were often at variance with traditional patterns, sometimes they were not actually put into practice. Thus the actual socialization of the child tended to reflect traditional patterns more than might have been expected.

Much of the discussion focused on the quality of parent-child interaction as a key variable in the study of family forms, and several major patterns of behavior were outlined. One researcher indicated that in studying communal living arrangements she often had found an emphasis on a strong, dependent relationship between parent and newborn through the first year or two. After this period, the parents gradually pressured the child into increasing independence, active involvement with the peer or play group, and contact with other adult caretakers (who are more readily available in family forms such as communes). Another discussant identified a second pattern characteristic of some emergent family forms, that involved an emphasis on parent-infant and parent-child interdependence from infancy onwards; the children were allowed to express their needs for dependency or autonomy as they wished. These two patterns involve minimal parental intervention in the child's decisions and affairs; at the same time, they contrast with one current characterization of the middle-class nuclear family, according to which the parents simply withdraw from interaction with their children as they grow older. In the latter case, the child is provided with few adult models and in general little meaningful contact with adults.

More research is needed on the impact of new roles and functions given to individual members within the family system. The growing importance of the male's role in many emergent family forms was discussed. Participants

advocated increased research on the effect of the blurring of sex role distinctions and the increased availability of males (whether social or biological fathers) as models for children. Furthermore, in emergent family forms significant roles may be assigned to adolescents (who effectively have no role in the traditional, nuclear family), to the elderly, and even to handicapped children.

Research Methods and Approaches

It was suggested that a central concern in this area of research should be the development of a taxonomy of family forms, and three broad strategies for researching emergent family forms were suggested.

Discussants agreed that an initial step in this direction could be a survey to establish the range and frequency of various family forms, since at present there is little reliable data on many types of family forms. In part this is because the people who practice alternative lifestyles are rarely those who are "visible," or who are active participants in community life or consumers of the services offered by health and welfare institutions.

In addition to this initial broad survey, discussants urged the development of a list of critical independent variables in order to formulate a working taxonomy of emergent family forms. Warning that such a taxonomy should be constantly revised, the participants suggested various dimensions and critical points of diversity which might be important for the development of continua of family forms:

- presence or absence of children
- marriage form (e.g., monogamy, polyandry, polygyny, group marriage, etc.)
- parent/child roles (e.g., egalitarian or authoritarian)
- legal or extra-legal nature of kinship ties

00060

- permanence of family grouping
- extension of kinship (e.g., nuclear family or extended kin)
- social class
- race or ethnicity
- religion or ideology
- degree of joint financial or economic arrangements

Third, participants suggested that specific research projects be designed to test the relationships between the logically derived cells or variables and the dependent variables--the child's physical, mental and social development. Since there is always a problem with finding adequate funding for extensive research projects, it was suggested that researchers focus on those family forms which are found to occur most frequently in order to conserve limited time and scarce resources, and in order to provide the researcher with reasonably large samples.

The taxonomic approach may have certain drawbacks, however. The discussants suggested that researchers also look for child-rearing practices that cut across the different groups or taxonomic cells; many of the individuals involved in alternative family forms come from the same middle- and upper-class backgrounds as those who have chosen "traditional" family styles, and consequently may actually share certain basic attitudes and values. Furthermore, the participants urged that emergent family forms also be considered from a developmental, evolutionary point of view.

Those researchers who had completed studies in the area of emergent family forms presented fairly detailed examples of methodological problems they had encountered and brief summaries of the methods used in their own research. For instance, one participant pointed out that families with

09061

newborn infants were ideal subjects for longitudinal studies on child-rearing. By choosing this strategy she had been able to eliminate the problem of having to consider the experience of the child prior to the research project or to the family's involvement in the commune or other family form. In conducting the study, the researcher had included these procedures:

- an initial neurological study so that no damaged infants were included
- extensive, behaviorally-oriented interviews with the parents
- naturalistic observation of daily family activities at regular intervals
- an evaluation of the impact of the researcher on the family through an "obtrusiveness index" derived from semantic differential categories
- a pediatric examination at age one year
- an evaluation of the child's competence particularly in terms of his way of life
- laboratory experiments at the age of one year on selected aspects of socio-emotional development

Although the children studied were not necessarily representative of all alternative lifestyles, an attempt was made to control for important factors such as parental family orientation and socioeconomic level. In addition, standardized testing materials and manuals were used whenever possible.

The participants discussed the relative advantages of quantitative and qualitative research methods, and came to the conclusion that statistical, quantitative, and laboratory studies should be augmented by qualitative assessments of emergent family forms. In order to test laboratory-derived hypotheses in "the real world," the group tentatively urged the

use of interdisciplinary research teams. Some participants warned, however, that such teams often have little success, since researchers and practitioners find it difficult to understand the terminology, research techniques, and interests of other disciplines.

Government funding agencies could provide a valuable service by coordinating research efforts, methodologies and findings in the field of emergent family forms. Individual disciplines have failed to produce such syntheses on their own because professional rewards usually go to those who are doing "new" research. The government should encourage critical reviews and increased publication of data already collected by providing more grants for writing as well as research. In a similar vein, participants advocated more cooperation among investigators, pointing out that uniqueness in research is often overrated; researchers must learn to use the tools, tests, and gains of others.

It was suggested that a global or holistic approach to interaction and family role functioning be used in studying emergent family forms, rather than a more typical research approach which focuses on each role independent of the others within the family system. In addition to this investigation of internal family processes, participants suggested that the interaction of the family with the external systems of the neighborhood and community be examined. The way in which children raised in emergent family forms fare when they are confronted later in life with existing establishment social institutions and when they interact with the larger community was seen to be a particularly important aspect of this general issue.

Similarly, the participants urged that in studying emergent family forms greater consideration be given to ecological constraints. They recommended that researchers take into account more carefully the impact

of the physical environment and the availability of resources on the emergence and stability of diverse family forms. Some of the patterns that have been labeled as emergent or alternative may be so only in terms of a particular category of people, such as white middle-class groups and may be "traditional" in other ethnic or cultural groups. Many social scientists argue that certain family forms, such as the stereotyped single-parent, matrifocal, black family, developed out of necessity in response to specific physical, economic, and social constraints, while emergent family forms popular in the 1960's may have resulted primarily from "voluntary" decisions. Increased access to the resources needed to adopt middle-class norms and family patterns may reduce the incidence of "alternative" lifestyles among ethnic and racial groups such as Chicanos and blacks.

The group members agreed that it would be worthwhile to make use of existing data on populations other than the white middle-class. In evaluating the effects of various child-rearing practices and family forms, it may turn out that a pattern found to produce a certain set of consequences in white middle-class families actually leads to entirely different consequences in other populations.

It may prove useful to directly compare similar lifestyles that have been adopted by various social or cultural groups under different circumstances and for quite different reasons. In this way researchers might be able to get a better handle on the cause of problems encountered by families, and identify problems, for example, that simply involve adjustment to new lifestyles or that reflect difficulties inherent in the actual structure of the family system, or that relate to constraints imposed by the environment and society.

00064

Finally, some participants noted a tendency for approaches to research on emergent family forms to be value-laden and to reflect social policy and popular opinion. They cautioned against judging the value of research primarily in terms of its immediate applicability. Basic research should still be encouraged so that research efforts do not proceed only in predetermined directions, aimed at the solution of specific problems. Scientists must be able to pursue hypotheses and ideas derived from theoretical and empirical work as well as well as from considerations of societal needs, and should try to employ the same rigor as in other less emotion-charged areas.

Dissemination and Implementation

The discussants stressed the need for improved methods of dissemination of research findings regarding alternative and emergent lifestyles. Several participants pointed out that it was important to communicate scientific information to the community, (and especially to those participating in alternative lifestyles), as well as to those in government. As one means of making information available to those who might derive some benefit from it, discussants suggested that scientists investigate and take advantage of "indigenous" communication networks used by those persons and groups involved in alternative lifestyles. In addition, measures involving parent education, teacher training, and communication with those in the health and social work fields would facilitate the dissemination of current information. This might ultimately benefit persons who practice alternative lifestyles in two ways: directly, by providing them with information they might need about the effects of their child-rearing practices; and indirectly, by changing attitudes and practices of the

landlords, school administrators and other individuals and officials who often discriminate against them.

Some discussants were not optimistic about the potential for bringing about quick change in the larger society, however. It was pointed out that schools and other institutions which have contact with children and families can change only as part of a general change process in society. They cannot assimilate radical findings about the family and change their practices and procedures overnight, unless the general public is willing to accept such innovations (which usually cost a great deal of money).

The researcher is not the only source of information available to the general public about alternative lifestyles. One discussant pointed out that there is some evidence that emerging family forms have a direct impact on family patterns in the larger society. Certain attitudes and child-rearing patterns initially found primarily in alternative lifestyles seem to be filtering into the conventional family--although in a less crystallized form. This reciprocal flow of values and styles should be studied as an important phenomenon in its own right.

Most participants in the workgroup agreed that researchers had to give greater consideration to the policy implications and ultimate consequences of their research activities. Any research on emergent family forms, whether basic or applied, might ultimately be the basis for decision-making, and such decisions very well could have important effects on such families, both positive and negative. The discussants concluded however, that there will be no good basis for making policy and legislative recommendations until researchers know more about how different family forms affect the growth and development of the child. With this end in

mind, it was suggested that some organization, such as the Interagency Panel, try to develop a solid rationale for research on family forms and the child. This would help agencies formulate research priorities for funding investigations of the complex research topics pertaining to emergent family forms.

The discussants suggested that in the last analysis what was needed was not simply a synthesis of information or better utilization of research findings; not all of the answers to crucial questions are to be found in research. As one participant pointed out, the group was "talking about planned social change--and that has to do with power, and control, and what things are and are not allowed." Since researchers are generally not good politicians, it was suggested that a child and family advocate is needed to lobby for people of all lifestyles at the highest levels of government.

In summary the panel approached the topic of emerging family forms from the point of view of investigating the relationships between family form and the growth and development of the child. Such family forms are not only of intrinsic interest for social scientists and practitioners; they also can serve as indicators of forces that affect other institutions in society.

00067

Specific Recommendations of the Workgroup on Emerging Family Forms and Life Styles

1. The Interagency Panel should develop an explicit rationale for research on emergent family forms as a basis for obtaining increased funding of such research.

2. An initial important task is to identify the various emergent forms and lifestyles.

3. Studies should not be oriented only toward negative aspects of emerging family forms; in some cases such forms might be creative sources or proving grounds for new forms and practices which can be adopted by many kinds of families.

4. Research should focus on how various lifestyles and emerging forms are related to child development.

5. A systematic study should be made of family roles, particularly male/female roles in middle-class, as well as working-class families.

6. Information should be disseminated to the government agencies and to the subject population.

7. Agencies should identify their research priorities and coordinate research in the area of family forms.

8. High priority ought to be given to multi-disciplinary, longitudinal studies which are "ecological" in orientation (i.e., which consider the environment--social and physical--in which the family is functioning).

9. A critical synthesis should be made of existing knowledge, as a springboard for new research, for developing new methodologies for studying whole families, and for formulating social policy.

10. The implications of emergent lifestyles should be considered with reference to the adequacy of existing laws, the relationship of the courts and other social institutions to these families, and the legal rights of children and youth.

11. Researchers should consider the impact of their findings on the families studied and on the attitudes and behavior of members of the larger society.

WORKGROUP ON CULTURAL PLURALISM

Participants in the Workgroup

Rosa Clausell, Moderator
Office of Child Development

Carolyn L. Attneave, Harvard School of Public Health

Daniel G. Brown, Indian Health Service, Phoenix, Arizona

Susan Bucknell, Carnegie Council on Children

Evelyn Fogarasi, Human Services Institute for Children and Families

Doris Hanson, American Home Economics Association

Maure Hurt, Jr., George Washington University

Luis M. Laosa, University of California at Los Angeles

Phyllis Levenstein, Family Service Association of Nassau County

Abraham Levine, Social and Rehabilitation Service

Edwin Nichols, National Institute of Mental Health

Julius Rivera, University of Texas at El Paso

Robert F. Winch, Northwestern University

I. Roger Yoshino, University of Arizona at Tucson

00069

WORKGROUP ON CULTURAL PLURALISM

Summary of the Discussion

The workgroup on cultural pluralism discussed research and policy issues in relation to family lifestyles and child-rearing practices in the major ethnic groups in the United States. The discussants approached the topic in three principle ways: (1) they attempted to define the "family" and "cultural pluralism"; (2) they discussed a wide variety of research approaches and methodologies from the point of view of cultural pluralism; and (3) they addressed key questions about the government's role in funding research and implementing policy decisions on ethnic issues.

Definitions

The family. The workgroup first tried to develop a broad, operational definition of the family that could be used to describe the structure and functions of families of various ethnic groups in the United States, among which are included Afro-Americans, Spanish-speaking Americans, and American Indians.

Most discussants agreed that a distinction should be drawn between the "household" (a spatial term connoting a common dwelling) and the "family" (a relational term connoting the kinship ties of those who may or may not share a dwelling or reside in close physical proximity). In addition to this distinction, the workgroup recommended that researchers differentiate types of family structures and not use a single, imprecise term to refer to a variety of organizational types. The family forms most often brought up during the sessions included: the isolated nuclear family; the nuclear family

embedded in a network of kin who share goods, services, and mutual aid; and the extended family (such as that classically found in India or China) in which the nuclear family cannot be identified as a separate, meaningful social unit.

The workgroup concluded that it would be useful to identify parameters along which family forms vary. Such parameters would include: (1) functions performed by the family; (2) the spatial distribution of the family (in one household, in close proximity, or widely scattered); (3) ethnicity; (4) the stage in the family's life cycle at which research is undertaken; (5) the number, age, and sex of individuals composing the family; (6) the relationships of those in the household (whether affinal, consanguineal, or adoptive); and (7) the family's socioeconomic level or class. Of special importance for the workgroup was the ideology, or value system of the ethnic group under investigation, as will be discussed in more detail in the section on cultural pluralism.

The discussants advised social scientists to avoid ethnocentric approaches to research and inflexible a priori definitions of family form and function. The kinship and social units that perform the basic family functions and provide the "family experience" for the child may vary across cultures. One participant pointed out that for Spanish-speaking Americans, there are actually three levels of the "family": la familia, or extended family; el barrio, or neighborhood network of extended families of many social classes; and then a more tenuous extension of kinship, as identified by the term, La Raza.

With regard to general research strategies, the workgroup members urged that researchers not become preoccupied with questions of structure and

30071

family form, but concentrate instead on processes and functions. The participants discussed key internal and external family functions that might be investigated across cultures. Internally, the family is a system of emotional/supportive relationships, such as those between mother and child, or husband and wife. Through these relationships, critical tasks such as socialization of children, housekeeping, and preparation of food are carried out. The family also has functions which require contact with the external world. For example, someone must be involved in the economic system in order to secure what is needed for physical survival. The family and the larger society also maintain important linkages through health, education, and welfare services and institutions, and through television and other forms of mass media. These transactions are monitored by the family, and influences that are considered undesirable are filtered out accordingly. Families vary greatly, however, in their ability to insulate their members from unacceptable values and activities, and consequently it is difficult for the researcher to assess the impact of such things as television programming on individual families.

Cultural pluralism. While no operational definition of cultural pluralism or ethnicity was developed, workgroup particpants did formulate a working definition as a basis for future discussion of the issue. Cultural pluralism was defined as a research approach or perspective which includes culture as one of the many variables which a researcher must consider. In the past, American institucions and attitudes have reflected a "melting pot" theory, according to which successive waves of immigrants and cultural groups were assimilated into the mainstream of American life and their original cultures lost. Where the melting pot theory suggests "all into one," cultural pluralism suggests "one, yet many."

Some discussants felt that "ethnicity" was a more accurate term than "cultural pluralism" for discussing variation in social patterns in the United States. As used by many social scientists, cultural pluralism implies that each segment of a society has its own distinct social, cultural, political, and economic institutions. In the United States, however, any two ethnic groups may have many different values and activities, but still participate in the same economic, social, and political systems. Thus, ethnicity not only may be a more familiar word for many, it also may be a better description of the actual relationship between ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.

As defined by the workgroup, ethnic categories are distinguished by differences in values, religion, language, and cuisine, among other factors. (One participant argued that the term ethnic category is preferable in this case to ethnic group because the latter term suggests an organized body of interacting people, as found, for instance, in a small community or neighborhood.) Ethnic boundaries are difficult to establish in some cases, however, since as much variation in behavior can exist within as across ethnic categories. Some discussants indicated that a distinctive value system may be one of the most crucial points of differentiation between ethnic categories, and suggested that research along these lines should be encouraged. The members of the workgroup discussed three types of value systems that might fruitfully be investigated in relation to ethnic differences. The value systems can be characterized by the nature of the relationships given highest priority: (1) person/object; (2) person/person; and (3) person/group. In the first philosophical system, the major value orientation is toward the acquisition of objects. The second type of value orientation emphasizes the satisfaction of interpersonal relationships, while the third

emphasizes the cohesiveness of the group over individual interpersonal relationships or the acquisition of objects.

Research Methods and Approaches

The workgroup members hoped that in the future researchers would approach the field with as few preconceptions as possible. Although most participants advised that previous research and findings not be totally ignored, they argued that "traditional" definitions and models of the family have primarily been based on the norms and standards of white, middle-class society. As a result, descriptive research is critically needed in order to determine the true nature of major ethnic categories. If necessary, new methodologies should be developed by social scientists so that ethnic and cultural variation can be investigated with as little bias as possible.

Although the research issues considered by the workgroups are interrelated, they can be separated for the purposes of discussion into the following topics: (1) general research issues; (2) the biases of existing research models and techniques; (3) the need for community input into research design and implementation; (4) the role of class and status variables in relation to cultural pluralism; and (5) the integration of research efforts. Each of these will be discussed in more detail below.

General research issues. Participants in the workgroup discussed the merits of various contrasting approaches to research, such as (1) basic and applied research, (2) inductive and deductive methods, and (3) qualitative and quantitative studies. The general stance taken by the workgroup with regard to each of these issues was that the broadest and most flexible approach was the best.

Discussants concluded that both basic and applied research were necessary for a major investigation of cultural pluralism and the family. They urged

that basic research be both descriptive and experimental in design. In particular, demographic, longitudinal, and ecological studies (concentrating on the social and physical environment) should be carried out on a variety of research topics. For example, the effect of the loss of the parent tongue (or acquisition of a second language) on the development of thought, personality, and ethnic solidarity and identity, was seen to be an important research issue. One participant pointed out that a general systems approach might be especially useful in such cases, since such a method allowed for the examination of the many different and usually interrelated factors that affect the family in a culturally and ecologically diverse setting. Another participant suggested that certain areas of the country be chosen for intensive research of all kinds in order to find out what patterns of family behavior actually exist, before funding agencies become committed to particular research priorities and directions.

Members of the workgroup also pointed out that, while it would be foolish to set firm research priorities at this point when so little is known about the research area, more applied research projects should nevertheless be encouraged and supported. Several participants supported the idea of conducting family impact studies. It was pointed out that in the future, social policies may have to be evaluated in terms of their effects on family life across the various ethnic and socioeconomic categories in the United States. Such evaluation might necessitate the development of complex computer simulation models of family functioning and development. One participant cited as an example a proposed change in welfare laws that would require a mother to work or receive reduced benefits. Such a policy could have serious impact on the family structure and child-rearing patterns of poor families of all ethnic categories, if complementary day-care programs were not available

00075

or adequate to meet increased demand.

In much the same way, workgroup participants debated the relative worth of two general methods of formulating and investigating research questions and hypotheses. Some discussants preferred the more traditional approach in which the researcher derives a set of variables that, on theoretical and logical grounds, might be expected to figure prominently in family behavior across ethnic groups. Key family and ethnic variables could then be organized into a matrix that could be used to guide the selection and testing of specific hypotheses.

Most discussants, however, objected that while such methods may be valuable in many research areas, in regard to cultural pluralism they might have the undesirable effect of pre-defining research issues too rigidly. Many participants suggested that instead of traditional experimental methods, whether in laboratory or natural settings, participant observation should be used as a primary research technique. Researchers could concentrate on qualitative rather than quantitative approaches, with the objective of truly "getting into" the culture and ways of the target population. If the research participants perceive the scientists as sympathetic and trustworthy, such approaches might yield more reliable information than more traditional deductive methods. Qualitative, inductive approaches to research might lead to the identification of many important phenomena that would be ignored in a priori conceptualizations of research issues and problems.

Biases in existing models. Research on ethnic categories often has been built around deficit models. Researchers and polity-makers have considered minority groups primarily in terms of their "problems" and have interpreted many divergences from mainstream patterns as deficient, inadequate,

00076

and potential sources of social ills. Workgroup participants urged that "plus" models be adopted by researchers in the future. Such models would point up the strengths of cultural groups and direct research toward those individuals or families who sucessfully adapt to a culturally plural context, rather than toward those who fail.

In spite of the psychic energy inevitably expended in coping with widespread, institutional racism or discrimination, certain individuals do manage to deal with the social ambiguities and conflicts inherent in a plural society. Some do this by assimilating the attitudes, values, and behavior patterns of the dominant majority, and by in turn rejecting their own ethnic origins. On the other hand, some members of minority groups do not respond in such a passive, self-depreciative way to cultural pluralism. Instead of submerging their cultural values in the face of conflicting lifestyles, they learn to use both their original and adopted cultural perspectives in appropriate situations and settings. Such an approach to ethnicity does not necessarily imply the loss of positive identification with the original cultural group.

Several ways of avoiding ethnocentric approaches to research were suggested by the workgroup. Discussants supported the current emphasis on developing multidisciplinary research teams and selecting principal investigators from a variety of ethnic groups. Researchers were also urged to avoid interpretations which involved labels or stereotypes of ethnic categories in lieu of sophisticated, complex analyses. Most importantly, the workgroup agreed that the ethnic groups or communities should have input into (but not control over) research in which they are participating.

Community input. Community involvement in the research process could take many forms. Investigators might solicit aid from persons indigenous

to a cultural group in defining the issues to be studied (based on their awareness of their own culture and the needs of their community), train members of the target population to act as part of the research team, and urge community members to contribute their insights into cultural patterns and values during the analysis of research data.

The discussants pointed out that certain problems may arise when community input is actively sought for a research project. For instance, how do researchers go about selecting "representatives" from ethnic populations involved in the research? Discussants suggested that attempts should be made to include grass-roots leaders and non-leaders, from both high- and low-income levels. According to one suggestion, the funding agencies could encourage the inclusion of community input in the research process by scrutinizing research proposals and giving preference to those projects that have multiethnic research teams.

Socioeconomic and class variables. At several points the discussion of ethnicity and cultural pluralism centered on the relationship between ethnic group membership and socioeconomic level. The workgroup suggested that this was an important topic for research since the two variables seemed to be easily confounded. The workgroup members indicated that poverty, however, often appears to have similar effects on the family and on child-rearing patterns regardless of ethnic background. These effects may be due largely to the social and physical environments within which poor families live--the quality of the neighborhoods in which they can find housing, the schools their children attend, and the health and welfare services that are available to them. Participants suggested that scientists investigate not only the effects of socioeconomic status across ethnic categories, but also the variation created within an ethnic category by socioeconomic factors.

Participants in the workgroup pointed out that social scientists must develop new measures and techniques in order to conduct research on socioeconomic levels in different cultural categories. Traditional reliance on measures of father's occupation and education are inadequate for many cultural and ethnic groups, and should be supplemented by a consideration of other factors. In devising measures of socioeconomic level, investigators should seek characteristics which might be universal or meaningful across cultures. One discussant suggested that representatives of ethnic groups help devise more useful socioeconomic categories and measures, and that research participants be consulted as to their own perceptions of their position in a system of categories.

Several participants also expressed interest in research on the forces in society that generate conditions of socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic inequality. Such research would not focus narrowly on individual ethnic groups, but would examine the general social, political, and economic environments within which each culture operates.

Integration of research findings. The discussants were particularly critical of the lack of comparability in categories, concepts, and methods found both in sources of raw data, such as the United States Census, and in published research. Several recommendations for ameliorating the situation emerged from the discussion. Some discussants maintained that an annotated bibliography of research on the family and cultural pluralism should be made available. Such a bibliography might be compiled for each major ethnic category by two representatives of the category and would include traditional research (much of which contains a white, middle-class bias, as mentioned above), as well as research that incorporates the cultural group's own perspective and assessment of patterns, problems and strengths. Second,

discussants pointed out that sources of data for longitudinal and comparative research, such as the Census and other official documents, should be revised in line with the needs of the professional community. It was recommended that old categories be retained, but that new categories suggested by current trends and priorities in research and policy-making be added. Finally, the workgroup members generally supported the concept of increasing the comparability of research findings through the development of marker variables--an effort the Interagency Panel is involved in. The workgroup suggested that funding agencies be surveyed in order to ascertain what variables are being used as marker variables in current research. One participant questioned whether the use of marker variables was consistent with a culturally plural approach to the family. The workgroup urged that marker variables be used in a sophisticated way and that the researcher not ignore the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the many different ethnic groups. Many workgroup participants expressed a belief that well-chosen marker variables could be extremely useful for future research on families of diverse cultural and ethnic categories.

Implications of Cultural Pluralism for Policy-Making

Several questions were raised toward the end of the workgroup session about government sponsorship of research on ethnic groups in the United States, although few clear recommendations emerged from this part of the discussion. The workgroup applauded the federal agencies' interest in the concept of cultural pluralism; discussants hoped that government-sponsored research in the area would facilitate the formulation of more effective social policy.

The workgroup raised questions about the nature and degree of the government's commitment to a cultural pluralism approach. Is the government

ready to fund special programs for different ethnic categories? Will families be allowed to follow different cultural practices if this means greatly increased financial costs for the government (e.g., in the case of mental health problems or bilingual education)? What political factors exist that might push the government and social agencies into rejecting pluralism and basing future policies on the concept of the assimilation and submergence of ethnic differences?

If federal agencies do support the idea of a plurality of cultures within the larger American society, how do agencies begin to help families function in a plural social system? The workgroup urged that three aspects of this question be given priority for government-funded research projects. First, what are the effects of pluralism on the ethnic category? How, for example, do you deliver services to children of different ethnic categories in such a way as to help them build positive self-concepts without rejecting their ethnicity? Second, what are the effects of pluralism on the dominant group? How are children raised within a dominant ethnic group socialized to have attitudes of racial and ethnic superiority? How can such behavior patterns be changed? Third, how do members of the larger society interact with members of the smaller, ethnic groups on personal, social, and political levels within a plural context?

Finally, the question was raised, "How does the federal government--through policy and research efforts--make cultural pluralism an issue of concern for the dominant group?" The workgroup pointed out that in many regards this was a political question, since the power on the one hand to intervene in the affairs of other cultural groups or on the other, to allow free expression of ethnic, cultural, or subcultural differences, lies with the dominant group in a society. The government could take a big step

toward creating positive attitudes about cultural pluralism, however, and could change the climate of research and policy-making, by encouraging the inclusion of the plural perspective wherever possible.

Social scientists also can disseminate information about cultural pluralism. The discussants suggested that professionals try to educate students and the general public about ethnicity and the conditions that generate discrimination and segregation. The workgroup recommended that a major conference on ethnicity be held as a first step in promoting discussion of cultural pluralism within the social science disciplines, the government, and the public sector.

00082

Specific Recommendations of the Workgroup on Cultural Pluralism

1. There is a need for descriptive studies on the forms and functions of families and other social units that include children, so that more sophisticated comparative research can be carried out.

2. More research should be undertaken on the development of ethnocentric and racist attitudes in children.

3. A critical synthesis of research on the family and annotated bibliographies of the various ethnic groups should be prepared.

4. Research approaches should be as flexible and innovative as possible, with emphasis given to the investigation of the strengths as well as the weaknesses of ethnic groups.

5. The indigenous community should be involved in various stages of research through direct community input and through the development of multi-disciplinary research teams that would draw researchers from a variety of ethnic and racial groups.

6. Efforts should be made to increase comparability in research.

7. A conference on ethnicity and the family should be sponsored in order to formulate priorities for basic and applied research in the area.

8. The government's commitment to and roles in advancing the concept of cultural pluralism, need to be more clearly defined.

00083

WORKGROUP ON ETHICS AND FAMILY RESEARCH

Participants in the Workgroup

Joseph S. Drage, Moderator
National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke

Diana Baumrind, University of California at Berkeley

Velma S. Brawner, Office of Education

Catherine S. Chilman, University of Wisconsin

Ira H. Cisin, George Washington University

Betty E. Cogswell, University of North Carolina

Elizabeth Y. Davis, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Joan E. Duval, Office of Education

Lois Elliott, National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke

Martin Engel, National Institute of Education

Ramon Garcia, Office of Child Development

Richard Graham, Brookings Institution

Nancy G. Harries, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Sheila Hollies, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Geraldine J. Norris, Bureau of Community Health Services

Ronald H. Ouellet, George Washington University

Craig Polite, SUNY at Stony Brook

Nancy M. Robinson, University of Washington

Robert G. Ryder, National Institute of Mental Health

Cecelia Sudia, Office of Child Development

Marvin B. Sussman, Case Western Reserve University

Joseph L. White, University of California at Irvine

99084

WORKGROUP ON ETHICS AND FAMILY RESEARCH

Summary of the Discussion

Two primary relationships were the focus of much of the discussion: (1) the relationship between the researcher and the subject population, particularly the family and its component individuals (e.g., father, mother, child and adolescent); and (2) the relationship between the researcher and the government.

Specific topics discussed by the group included: (1) problems in defining and using the principle of informed consent; (2) confidentiality of data; (3) the researcher's responsibility to the subject population, including compensation and follow-up; (4) the need for community input at some point during the research project; (5) motivations for and impact of government funding; (6) coordination of research priorities and activities; and (7) the roles of the government and the research community in the regulation of research ethics.

The Researcher and the Research Participants

The relationship between researchers and the larger society was a primary focus of the discussion. Discussants pointed out that this relationship soon would be constrained by strong legal as well as moral standards. (At the time, guidelines and requirements for the conduct of research were being developed by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and by Congress.) There was concern that any such attempts to regulate social science research would be unworkable and ineffectual if they involved inflexible, "blanket" regulations and restrictions.

09085

Furthermore, some participants indicated that it was difficult to legislate morality, and that to do so would deprive the researcher of his autonomy and eventually blunt his own sense of morality and responsibility to research populations.

One participant described a set of guidelines then under consideration by the government. As delineated by these guidelines, informed consent has two basic elements: comprehension of adequate information and autonomy of consent. A person giving consent must be informed fully of the nature and purpose of the research and the procedures to be used; the researcher must identify those procedures which are experimental, and point out possible attendant short- or long-term risks or discomforts. Furthermore, there must be written evidence that the person has been informed of alternative treatment methods.

While most participants in the workgroup agreed that obtaining informed consent was a valid and worthwhile research practice, they expressed dissatisfaction with some of the specific requirements outlined above. For instance, they called attention to the implications of requirements to reveal information about alternative "treatment" methods, and argued that such rules and guidelines could not be applied rigidly across the many behavioral, social, and medical scientific disciplines. Can a medical study that involves alternative surgical or pharmacological treatments be equated with a psychology experiment that concerns different problem-solving techniques? If "blanket" regulations were established, would the researchers be required to provide the subjects with complete information about research objectives, hypotheses, theories, design and methodological techniques, regardless of the nature of the

study? If so, it would be virtually impossible to collect "clean" information and to design an unbiased study, even in the most naturalistic type of research setting. The basic and unresolved question for the discussants was therefore, "How much information must be offered to subjects to enable them to give truly informed consent?"

A second issue considered by the group concerned the problem of obtaining informed consent in the case of the young child and adolescent. In some proposed regulations, the age requirement for informed consent has been set at seven years (the Catholic age of consent). Discussants pointed out that this suggestion is based on unproven assumptions about the intellectual and socio-emotional abilities of children. On the other hand, the capability of adolescents to speak for themselves is ignored by a proposed requirement that both parents agree in writing to an adolescent's participation in a research project. In fact, seeking permission from parents in this way might lead ultimately to an invasion of the adolescent's privacy. It may prompt parents to ask questions about the nature of the adolescent's life that he or she desires to keep secret, especially if they relate to potentially illegal or disapproved behaviors.

There was some question about when during the research process informed consent should be obtained. Some discussants advocated that it be sought not only prior to the data collection, but also prior to the design of the study and the use of the data. Such consent would be particularly important when data was in the form of tape recordings or video tapes, in which case the subject's anonymity might be more difficult to protect.

Participants decided that general guidelines should be formulated, rather than specific regulations which would be applied without fail in every situation. Such guidelines could be based on the right of the child, the adolescent, and other family members to decide not to participate in an experiment, and could be tailored to fit different situations, capabilities, and types of research settings. The amount of information that would have to be provided to enable a subject to give informed consent would vary according to whether the study was "unobtrusive and naturalistic" or "obtrusive, intensive, and longitudinal." One difference in the need for informed and uninformed consent might lie, therefore, in whether research focuses on behavior that clearly is open to public scrutiny, or relies on manipulation and experimentation to gather data.

Participants suggested that if social scientists devoted as much creative energy to devising strategies for obtaining truly informed consent as they have to devising strategies of deception in the past, a researcher could be honest with subjects and still do effective research. The primary responsibility of the researcher should be to insure that the subject genuinely understands his right to refuse to participate, and that he is informed in advance of any risks that may accompany the research treatment or intervention.

The workgroup also discussed problems related to the confidentiality of information gathered in the course of research. How can a proper balance be achieved between the researcher's conflicting obligations to disseminate information to the scientific community and to protect the research population? Workgroup participants pointed out that researchers had to share findings with other professionals if complex scientific and

social problems are ever to be solved. At the same time, the rights and anonymity of the research subjects must be carefully guarded. Some discussants stated that subjects do have the right to control the way in which their case histories and other data are to be used. Yet, in this age of computerized data banks, control over the uses of the scientist's data is increasingly difficult. Other discussants argued, however, that the subject should not necessarily have the right to "veto" the use of data after they have been collected. They suggested that research subjects be given the opportunity to rebut research conclusions published in journals and in the popular press--especially when the findings have political implications or when a group or category of people is being characterized in some way.

It may be more difficult for the researcher to maintain confidentiality in some research settings than in others. In intensive studies of the family (for instance as a system of coalitions and relationships in conflict) certain members of the family, such as the parents, may pressure the researcher to reveal information gathered from other members of the family. Special efforts must be made in such cases not to violate the rights and trust of any of the research participants.

The discussants also considered in depth the issue of community input in research activities. Although in many cases the sample populations can not necessarily add scientific expertise to the design, implementation, or interpretation of research, their participation at some or all of these points in a research project may give the study a more balanced perspective, and is justified on ethical grounds. Several discussants pointed out that a "myth of objectivity" is often promulgated

by researchers who, in fact, often choose research models that reflect their own ideological or philosophical biases. This is a significant problem, especially if research has policy implications or is being directed at a population other than that for which the model was originally formulated. As one participant stated, it is "difficult for middle-class white researchers to appreciate the special qualities of family groups which are not like them, without resorting to a deficit model." The group's position was not that the researcher should necessarily share the same background as the subject population, but that feedback from the community should be solicited so that the viewpoints of its members can be incorporated into the study. Furthermore, the researcher's philosophical stance should be made a part of the public record so that others might better assess his analysis and interpretation of the data.

The discussants acknowledged that it is not easy to implement a commitment to seek out community input. For example, how do you choose one, or even several "representative" spokesmen from a community or group of people? Does the community merely give advice, or does it have veto power over the type of study and the use of findings? Will community pressure influence the way in which a researcher collects and interprets data such that significant biases and distortions are introduced?

In spite of these problems, most participants in the workgroup accepted the principle that community input should occur as early as possible in the designing of research. One person underlined the importance of early participation and pointed out that otherwise, the legal right to disseminate findings could easily override any prior promises concerning community input.

Discussants conceptualized the central objective of community involvement as the incorporation of the "qualitative experience" of a particular group of people, rather than help in designing the specifics of the research project. This might be achieved through "rap" sessions, for example, in which potential subjects would have the opportunity to define problems they foresee.

Discussants argued that researchers are obligated to compensate people for participation in research, and to follow-up the effects of "intruding" in the family's affairs. Services, such as counseling, should be provided when needed or desired. Some participants objected to the use of the term "incentive" to describe compensation given the subject, because it implied a degree of manipulation; they preferred to describe the interaction between researcher and subject as an "exchange" relationship in which all types of people (not just the poor) were to be compensated for their time--as a sign of respect and appreciation. In deciding what type of compensation should be given, the needs and wishes of the subject population should be considered. For example, some subjects might prefer to obtain counseling or other services from the researcher, rather than financial remuneration.

Participants pointed out that if researchers become too involved with families and are called upon to provide services or advice before the study is completed, variables might be confounded and research data contaminated. One discussant urged more efforts toward developing research designs and strategies that would allow researchers to respond to requests for aid during a study without jeopardizing the data collection. The researcher must also consider his responsibilities with regard to inter-

vening in a family's affairs against the will of the family members, for instance in the case of physical or mental illness, or criminal activity. (One person suggested that some researchers react with "hysteria," to the slightest deviation from the norm.) At any rate, more consideration needs to be given to such problems by the research community.

The group's final assessment of the problem was that the responsibility of the researcher varies with the nature of the research being conducted, (for instance, the length of the time span, the age of the subjects, and the degree of intervention). Discussants recommended that funding agencies consider compensation and follow-up as integral aspects of the research process and that they specifically set aside the funds necessary for this purpose.

The Researcher and the Government

There were two primary concerns voiced by workgroup participants about the involvement of government in basic and applied research activity.

First, in both types of research, the researcher may be pressured by the government to favorably interpret or actually suppress undesirable findings, if this is politically expedient. Similarly, the government simply might not allow unfavorable findings to be published as a government report, thus lessening the public impact of the study by relegating its publication to scientific journals. The discussants argued that the researcher should have the right to establish, in advance, his control over the final report and its dissemination--whether the source of funding is by government grant or contract.

89092

Second, some participants postulated that it was unethical to accept a research contract if the government's motivation for funding the research was essentially to defer and avoid making unpopular decisions or taking substantive action on social problems. Other participants pointed out that research priorities often seem to be repetitive and unnecessary, presumably as a result of bureaucratic disorganization or the fact that, as Margaret Mead pointed out, "government has no history." Discussants acknowledged that research often is repeated unintentionally because of imperfect communication vertically and horizontally within the government. In some cases, earlier research may have been poorly done, or yielded insufficient data to permit application.

Other participants questioned the propriety of accepting government research contracts specially designed to help formulate policy decisions, when it is known on the basis of previous research that the hard facts necessary for such decision-making cannot be derived from the resultant data. In addition, concern was voiced that government decision-making often is based on single studies, which in themselves are incomplete and which should be considered in relation to other research findings in the area.

Some participants suggested that researchers should try to alter contracts they perceive as questionable or unethical, in order to investigate related but more worthwhile issues. Others advocated that the entire reward system be changed so that good researchers are not shunted away from important, "do-able" research into "fashionable" research projects for which government money is available.

A suggestion was made that historical studies might be undertaken to analyze the impact of the introduction of large amounts of government

money into a research area. What circumstances originally stimulated the interest and allocation of funds? Where did the money go? What final recommendations emerged and what recommendations were actually implemented as a result of this funding?

A further step toward the coordination of government-sponsored research might be accomplished by establishing a broad-based, scientific institute which, in conjunction with Congress, might take responsibility for developing five- or ten-year programs for research in various areas.

Toward Ethical Research

Throughout the meetings, the participants considered means of re-establishing a sense of trust in the relationship between researcher and subject, and researcher and government. The discussions focused on the effectiveness of government regulation (in contrast to self-regulation by the profession) in eliminating abuses and establishing trust.

All participants agreed that current guidelines proposed by the American Psychological Association (Ethical Principles, 1973) were quite workable. They pointed out that the APA formulation maintained a good balance between the rights of the subject population, the rights of the researcher, and the potential benefit that might be derived from each research project. Discussants endorsed a procedure in which such rights would be weighed by a committee of local scientists (and, hopefully, representatives of the general public) who could judge the feasibility of each project in the context of local conditions.

Several suggestions concerned the apparent inevitability of government regulation of research activities. Some participants advised that researchers try to determine ways in which proposed regulations could be

09994

improved, and subsequently communicate their suggestions to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Congress.

Most discussants appeared to believe, however, that regulations of any kind would fail to cure mistrust of professional researchers among the general public, and concluded that non-regulatory methods for dealing with research ethics were needed. General, flexible guidelines should be formulated with only a bare minimum of formally legislated regulation (such as an absolute prohibition on doing research that would harm young children).

Most importantly, efforts should be made to change the basic system that tends to support and even encourage abuses of research ethics. The research community should support educational activities aimed at accurately communicating to the public the purposes, methods and goals of research, so that citizens can distinguish between questionable or harmful research and justifiable, ethical research. Similarly, researchers should not be reluctant to criticize and expose research projects or practices that are unethical and harmful. A continuing dialogue among social scientists should be established in order to insure that the highest ethical standards are constantly applied to research and development efforts. Professional organizations and journals might be encouraged to devote more attention to the consideration of ethical issues, and measures to instruct students in the ethical as well as theoretical and methodological aspects of research could be incorporated into graduate training programs.

Finally, the group urged that when regulations are adopted by Congress or one of the agencies, they should be subjected to continual review. The review process should not involve simply a single public

hearing, as is now customery, but a continuing face-to-face exchange of information that would include researchers, representatives of research populations, and the individuals within the government who write the regulations, approve them, and enforce them.

In summary, all discussants agreed that the research community in some respects had failed to promote self-regulation. At the same time, participants maintained that most researchers were ethical and that an unintended by-product of strict legislated regulations might be an actual reduction in the sensitivity of the individual researcher to his responsibilities with regard to the research population. Absolute adherence to ethical principles in research was advised, especially since, as one participant indicated, society appeared to expect more from professionals in this regard than from other groups.

00096

Specific Recommendations of the Workgroup on Ethics and Family Research

1. Input from groups being studied should be sought at some point or points in the design, implementation, interpretation or publication of researcher projects and in the formulation of ethical guidelines for future research.

2. The research community should develop flexible guidelines for obtaining informed consent with regard to behavioral science research on children, adolescents, or the family.

3. More attention needs to be given to the problem of confidentiality of data and anonymity of subjects, especially when audio-visual records or detailed case studies are part of the research methodology.

4. Attempts should be made to determine how the research has altered family relationships or patterns; the researcher should provide appropriate compensation for the subject's participation, including necessary follow-up services after the researcher's intervention in the family.

5. Efforts should be made to establish a means of continuing, face-to-face communication between researchers and those formulating and implementing regulations, with a view toward re-emphasizing self-regulation of behavioral science research.

6. The researcher should seek at all times to resist efforts by any group, including the government or funding agencies, to alter or suppress research findings on the basis of political or other considerations.

7. Research contracts should be carefully scrutinized in order to determine whether they intentionally have been commissioned in lieu of substantive action, constitute duplication of previous efforts, or are unlikely to provide a basis for designated policy decisions.

8. A general study might be undertaken to determine the consequences of massive government funding in a particular research area.

9. The research community should investigate the feasibility of establishing a formal working relationship between Congress and a body of scientists to determine long-range plans for coordinated research funding by the government.

APPENDIX A

THE FAMILY: RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCERNS[1]

Prepared by

Adele Harrell, B.A.

Maure Hurt, Jr., Ph.D.

Edith H. Grotberg, Ph.D.

[1]Reprinted from A. Harrel, M. Hurt, Jr. and E. H. Grotberg, The Family: Research Considerations and Concerns. Washington, D.C. The George Washington University, Social Research Group, 1973

66098

THE FAMILY: RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCERNS

The Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development selected the Family as a theme around which to conceptualize and identify research questions and efforts that might well be used by the member Agencies as guides for their planning and support of research. Each Agency has within its legislative authorization and mission, the opportunity to address the Family in its research efforts. According to the different mandates, the Agencies address the family in different ways and from different perspectives, but each may study the Family. With the Panel focusing on the theme of the Family, the member Agencies might work together for greater coordination of research effort and better utilization of Agency resources. In addition to its value as a theme around which the Agencies could organize their thinking and planning, the Family was selected as a particularly important focus for research because of its critical role in the life of the young child.

(1) the family provides the primary interaction environment and influences the child in his early years;

(2) the family is perceived as the basic and critical social institution for child development;

(3) because of the complexity of the child-parent interactions within the family, the child cannot be served independently of the family; and

(4) parental involvement in child development programs and services may enhance the effectiveness of these programs and services.

The Panel addressed the problem of identifying research questions and efforts pertaining to the Family through Panel discussions and through an interview system.

The Panel discussions focused on the problems of definition of the Family, as well as some of the methodological problems inherent in research on a social system such as the Family. For purposes of the Panel, the following working definition of the family was accepted:

A family is a social unit which has or may have children

While a family may also be defined as "a social unit in which primary relationships are established and maintained," the definition including the reference to children seemed more appropriate to the Panel.

In terms of methodological problems, the Panel discussions included the following concerns and suggestions:

(1) Studies should be organized and designed to provide for analysis and reanalysis across studies over time.

(2) Studies should be conducted so that the privacy of families is protected.

(3) Longitudinal studies are especially appropriate as a method for family research.

(4) New and improved instrumentation and methodology are needed to cope more effectively with variables and factors, such as:

   a. socioeconomic status, but conceptualized as going beyond the traditional income, education, assistance, etc., and reflecting current social perceptions and conditions;

   b. family roles with regard to parent/child, parent/parent, parent/society, child/society, and family/society interactions;

c. ethnicity or cultural identity;

d. social forces and intervention procedures.

(5) Theories of family models should focus more on "healthy" families than on the traditional pathological family models.

(6) Research on the family should include methods for the dissemination and utilization of the findings.

The interviews were conducted with each member Agency on the Panel; some interviews were with single representatives of the Agencies while others were conducted with a group from a particular member Agency. During the interviews, the Agency representatives were asked to identify research questions pertaining to the Family which fell within the legislative mandate of their Agency and which already were or might be of interest to the Agency for support consideration. The research questions and concerns fell into three rather broad categories and are presented in Tables I, II, and III accordingly:

(1) The Internal Systems of the Family. Research questions under this category address the internal dynamics and structure of the family without concern for outside institutions. Any family form may be studied in terms of the functions of children, the role options within the family, the way family members meet their needs, the socialization function of the family, and the reasons why people have children. Research may well be designed to cut across the various family systems for comparative purposes. The need to study variant family forms as separate social systems should not be ignored; comparisons may not necessarily be appropriate. Specific research questions relating to the Internal Systems of the Family are presented in Table I. The research questions were provided by member Agencies of the Panel and are identified by checks in the appropriate boxes.

(2) The Family and Transactions with the External Systems. Research questions under this category address the family as it interacts with institutions other than the family or as outside institutions impinge on it. The external systems impinge on the family and frequently determine the limitations within which the family may function. On the other hand, the family may directly affect external systems by various kinds of behavior or lack of behavior. These external systems include the schools, the hospitals, the legal institutions, the churches, the social support systems, both institutional and non-institutional, the political, etc. Specific research questions relating to the Family and Transactions with the External Systems are presented in Table II. Again, the agencies submitting the questions are identified in the appropriate boxes.

(3) The Internal Systems of the Family and the Family and Transactions with the External Systems. Research questions under this category combine elements of both Internal and External Systems and draw on both for research purposes. Many research questions cannot be clearly categorized into internal systems of the family or the transactions of the family with the external systems. These questions bridge both kinds of systems or lift out aspects of one and relate them to aspects of the other. In order to address these more complex questions, a separate table is presented. Table III includes these research questions, again identifying the agency or agencies concerned with the questions.

As may be seen from Tables I, II and III, many research questions are identified by a number of Agencies to be within their legislative mandate as well as their current or likely area of interest. Sixteen questions were so identified by six or more agencies. They are lifted out from Tables I-III and presented according to the categories provided in Tables I-III. These sixteen questions begin on page 116.

TABLE I

Research Questions Relating to - The Internal Systems of the Family

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Investigations to determine the various family structures that exist in the United States; frequency; effects on parents (adults) and children	x	x	x			x	x			x	6
Descriptive studies of the life styles of families	x	x					x			x	4
Surveys of child rearing arrangements of various "types" of families	x	x	x								3
Study of decision-making processes in families	x	x					x				3
Identification of functions of the family at different stages of development	x	x	x		x						4
Experimental studies which indicate how parents learn how to act as parents	x	x	x		x						4
Examination of role-relationships and inter-generational influences among family members and identification of the forces or factors leading to change	x	x			x	x	x				5
Studies that focus more on the role of the father	x	x	x							x	4
What types of emotional security are needed by mothers to allow them to meet their children's needs ?	x	x	x		x						4
Studies that examine the impact of various kinds of labelling of children & families	x	x			x	x					4

TABLE I (cont'd)

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Research concerning the effect upon child development of family size and/or spacing of children	x	x	x		x		x		x		6
Studies of values in families concerning sex education	x				x						2
Investigations concerning family participation in society and impact on child's development	x				x		x	x		x	5
Determination of sources of information used by parents	x				x		x				3
Research upon the impact of isolation upon families	x	x					x				3
Results of the impact of increased geographical mobility on families	x	x	x		x	x	x	x			7
Research on the impact of increasing leisure time	x		x			x	x				4
Descriptive studies to determine cultural attitudes and beliefs of the various ethnic and social class groups in which families hold membership	x	x	x		x		x	x			6
Impact of changing sex roles upon families	x	x									2
Effect of the family/home on the child's learning, lifestyle, and future educational achievement										x	1
Effects of varying degrees of involvement of children in family activities upon the value structure of adolescents										x	1

00104

TABLE I (cont'd)

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Research on the adjustment potential of the family; what kinds of changes is a family capable of making and how can these skills be acquired?							x				1
Population studies, especially investigations of fertility practices and patterns; family oriented health studies, including genetic studies, that focus on the intact survival of babies, the avoidance of birth defects, and the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of mental retardation	x				x						2
Investigation of family attitudes and practices regarding a child handicapped by neurological disease or other handicapping conditions					x				x		2
Investigation of the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of families in regard to nutrition					x						1

TABLE II

Research Questions Relating to - The Family and Transactions with the External Systems

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Investigations of the environmental and sociocultural factors impinging upon families (e.g., schools, hospitals, type of housing, geographical region, cultural group norms, etc.) and their relationship to child-rearing practices, family roles and functioning, etc.	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			7
Determination of what should be taught to potential parents that will aid child development	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		8
Determination of the kinds of organizations and services for families which will be needed in new population concentrations likely to be common in the future		x	x		x	x	x				5
Determination of the ramifications which family structure has upon children's achievement and the ways in which family structure relates to school structure (e.g., male vs. female teacher and absent father vs. mother; birth order in relation to sex of teacher and sex of present or absent parent)	x	x	x			x		x			5
Determination of the influence of the role of the school in the community in which the family is a part; i.e., how do school programs (e.g., adult education) affect the family; how does parent and/or child participation in school activities affect the child's achievement behavior; effects upon the family if school takes the role in showing parents how to help their children		x		x		x	x	x		x	6

TABLE II (cont'd)

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Research on the impact upon children of parents interacting with the school (e.g., as aides, PTA, in planning, and decision-making, etc.)		x	x		x	x		x		x	6
Determination of the levels at which intervention with families might successfully take place	x	x	x		x	x	x				6
Determination of the strengths and weaknesses of various types of families in dealing with the society as a whole	x	x	x	x	x		x				6
Determination of the external supports needed by different types of families in order to determine the types of supplementary supports that should be provided by the neighborhood community and larger society		x	x	x	x		x				5
Studies to determine how we can effectively reach adolescents in delivering health services and/or educate them in good health practices that will affect child development	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			7
Research on ways to support and help parents assume a more active and aware role in promoting their child's developmental progress, including studies of kinds and effects of parental interaction with the school and determination of critical periods of interaction between the school, the child, and the family										x	1

TABLE II (cont'd)

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Impact on families of providing educational services to handicapped children at the local school level and not in residential institutions								x			1
Studies on the delivery of health services, particularly the hospital/home interface at the time of child birth	x	x			x						3
Studies to identify institutional barriers such as discrimination and lack of availability that inhibit family access to services					x						1
Studies to determine effective ways to delivery of medical, cultural, recreational and nutritional services to farm families							x				1

80108

TABLE III

Research Questions Relating to both - The Internal Systems of the Family and - The Family and Transactions with the External Systems

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Investigations into the motivational aspects of the family processes, societal interactions, and intrafamily relations	x	x				x	x	x			5
Research on the impact of media and dissemination of various types of information upon families	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	8
Determination of how parent behaviors are learned; how parents structure and amend their environment when they rear children; how to build in intervention that will help them learn what we think is important to child development	x	x			x			x		x	5
Exploration of areas in which the family may be legally supplanted, e.g., mechanisms for supplying children with homes away from home; mechanisms for maintaining as many primary ties as possible, especially those that might keep children in their old neighborhoods		x		x	x	x	x				5
Identification of familial goals for children and how society can help the family meet these goals	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				7
Determination of societal expectations for the family; i.e., what should be provided the child by the family; if these needs are supplied externally, what does this do to the family?		x	x		x		x				4
Identification of societal forces which help keep families together or pull them apart	x	x	x	x			x				5

TABLE III (cont'd)

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Study of existing models and prototypes for home-based education; how do the models differ from service-type programs that just provide care for children; in what sense in the home-based education cognitive, affective, etc. do we obtain the affective development desired by bringing in professionals; what type of parent education components are required; is home-based education possible for older children (e.g., 8-9 year olds)?		x	x				x	x		x	5
Investigations concerning the impact upon the family of having a handicapped child and ways in which outside agencies can help them cope (including children with learning disabilities)	x	x			x	x		x	x		6
Investigation of the impact of housing arrangements and conditions upon families; e.g., size of living quarters, crowding	x	x	x			x	x				6
Determination of the impact of day care upon families and identification of families for whom day care is and is not helpful. How are employment patterns, absenteeism and job turnover affected by providing day care services in various kinds of residential areas?	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	8
Studies on most effective policies/actions to be taken by the federal/state/local governments and/or private institutions and businesses to maximize the development of a "healthy" family						x					1

00110

TABLE III (cont'd)

	NICHD	NIMH	OCD	SRS	MCHS	ASPE	USDA	OE	NINDS	NIE	Frequency
Prevention and treatment of child abuse		x			x						2
Family related research that deals with the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of neurological disease or handicapping conditions and learning disability								x	x		2
What impact do economic shifts have on the cohesiveness and continuity of families ?							x				1

00111

Family-Related Research Questions

Identified by Six or More Agencies

Questions Relating to The Internal Systems of the Family

1.	Investigations to determine the various family structures that exist in the United States; frequency, effects on parents (adults) and children.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, ASPE, USDA, NIE
2.	Research concerning the effect upon child development of family size and/or spacing of children.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, MCHS, USDA, NINDS
3.	Results of the impact of increased geographical mobility on families.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, MCHS, ASPE, USDA, OE
4.	Descriptive studies to determine cultural attitudes and beliefs of the various ethnic and social class groups in which families hold membership.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, MCHS, USDA, OE
5.	Investigations of the environmental and sociocultural factors impinging upon families (e.g., schools, type of housing, geographical region, cultural group norms, etc.) and their relationship to child-rearing practices, family roles and functioning, etc.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, SRS, ASPE, USDA, OE
6.	Determination of what should be taught to potential parents that will aid child development.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, SRS, MCHS, USDA, OE, NINDS
7.	Determination of the influence of the role of the school in the community in which the family is a part; i.e., how do school programs (e.g., adult education) affect the family; how does parent and/or child participation in school activities affect the child's achievement behavior; effects upon the family if school takes the role in showing parents how to help their children.	NIMH, SRS, ASPE, USDA, OE, NIE

Questions Relating to The Family and Transactions with the External System

8.	Research on the impact upon children of parents interacting with the school (e.g., as aides, PTA, in planning, and decision-making, etc.) .	NIMH, OCD, MCHS, ASPE, OE, NIE
9.	Determination of the levels at which intervention with families might successfully take place .	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, MCHS, ASPE, OE

10.	Determination of the strengths and weaknesses of various types of families in dealing with the society as a whole.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, SRS, MCHS, USDA
11.	Studies to determine how we can effectively reach adolescents in delivering health services and/or educate them in good health practices that will affect child development.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, SRS, MCHS, USDA, OE

Questions Relating to Both: The Internal and the External Systems

12.	Research on the impact of the media and dissemination of various types of information upon families.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, MCHS, ASPE, USDA, OE, NIE
13.	Identification of familial goals for children and how society can help the family meet these goals.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, SRS, MCHS, ASPE, USDA
14.	Investigations concerning the impact upon the family of having a handicapped child and ways in which outside agencies can help them cope.	NICHD, NIMH, MCHS, ASPE, OE, NINDS
15.	Investigation of the impact of housing arrangements upon families.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, MCHS, ASPE, USDA
16.	Determination of the impact of day care upon families and identification of families for whom day care is and is not helpful.	NICHD, NIMH, OCD, MCHS, ASPE, USDA, OE

By reviewing the questions identified most frequently and considering the comments and additional research areas suggested during the interviews (these are summarized in the Appendix), some research themes and approaches across Agencies emerge. The results are outlined below.

1. What are the various family forms in the United States and what is the frequency and distribution of each?
   a. Descriptive studies of the membership, kinship relations and lifestyles of various family forms (i.e., communal families, single parent families, migrant families, foster families) are needed.
2. What contributes to successful family functioning?
   a. What kind of parental behavior is associated with healthy

child development? How is it learned? How is it affected by intrafamily influences?

b. What are the effects of family size, of spacing of children and/or family form?

c. What cultural values affect family function and how?

d. How do special problems such as handicapped children, ill health, and poverty affect the family?

e. How can healthy family functioning and child development be measured?

3. How does the family interact with environmental and sociocultural factors, especially social change? For example, what are the effects on the family and its members of the type of housing, geographical location and mobility, cultural attitudes, employment opportunities, and labeling of families and children? What societal forces help keep families together or pull them apart?

4. What is the impact on the family of the institutions that deal with the children of the family and, conversely, the impact of the family on these institutions?

a. What is the effect of the family structure (single parent, commune, etc.), and family problems (handicapping conditions, ill health, poverty) on the way in which a family interacts with institutions such as schools or health services?

b. What is the impact on child development and child-rearing practices of various kinds of institutions, services, and programs? What institutional barriers impede successful family functioning?

5. What policies and actions should the federal/state/local governments

and/or private institutions take to support the family and promote healthy child development?

a. What are family goals for children and how can society help the family meet these goals?

b. What external supports (i.e., medical, educational or welfare services) are needed to meet the needs of families--especially those with special problems such as handicapped children, adolescent parents, or English deficiencies? How can such support be provided? For example, what health services are needed and how can they be designed to support family function? What is the impact of day care or home-based education on families?

c. How can parenting skills be taught--at what level, to whom, and by what means?

d. What kind of information should be disseminated to families to promote child development, how (by whom, and to whom)?

Other research questions appear in the Tables which fall within the legislative mandate and interest of less than six Agencies. These questions are certainly not of less significance, but they lend themselves less well to multi-agency support or interagency planning. These questions may, however, be examined on an interagency basis, to determine if they are an adjunct to concerns and efforts of other Agencies, or indeed, feed into them at some later point in time. The possibilities are limited only by the imagination and resourcefulness of the Agencies.

The Interagency Panel on Early Childhood Research and Development is making this document available to member Agencies with the recommendation that the Agencies consider the contents of the document as they establish

research policies and priorities and as they plan their areas of support and allocation of resources.

SUMMARY OF AGENCY INTERVIEWS[2]

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)

ASPE suggested the following research questions concerning the family: What are the various family structures that exist in the United States? What is the frequency and distribution of each? What effects do these family structures have on the adults and children involved? How do these family structures interact/change with social changes (i.e., more income, women working, divorce, increased mobility, increased leisure time, media, sex role changes, etc.)? How is the impact manifested in the family unit and in the institutions that deal with the children of these families? What policies/actions should the federal/state/local governments and/or private institutions and business pursue to maximize the development of a "healthy"* family unit?

*"Healthy" families are defined as those requiring the least intervention of a remedial nature, such as mental health services or welfare services.

Office of Education OE, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH)

BEH indicated an interest in the impact on families of providing educational services to handicapped children at the local school level, which would return many of these children to their families from residential institutions. More information about the effect of a handicapped child on the family is desired. Personal interest was expressed in research on supportive services and parental education for families of handicapped children. Specific areas for such research included: research on weekend care for severely handicapped children to support the family by providing rest and vacation time, and the development of educational materials and films for parents for use by professional personnel.

---

[2] In some cases, several people from an agency were interviewed and the results combined.

OE, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)

Research questions of special interest to the Follow-Through program included: What is the impact on child development of families participation in society and of parental interaction with the school? and, What is the impact of media and the dissemination of various types of information, particularly educational information, upon families?

Further study of home-based education models and prototypes and their applicability to older children was suggested. Data on family structure and the spacing of children has been gathered through parent interviews and could be used to evaluate the correlation between various family structures and school performance measures.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)

All the research questions in Table I were of interest to NICHD. Areas of special concern included studies of family forms and lifestyles, particularly the roles, structure, and child-rearing practices of the communal family. The enhancement of human development could be promoted by investigation of questions such as what are sources of information (and guidance) used by families, what are various family attitudes and values concerning sex education, and what are the effects of isolation upon families and family members.

The agency has a special concern for health studies and the following research areas were suggested: Population studies--especially investigations of fertility practices and patterns; family-oriented health studies (including genetic studies) that focus on the intact survival of babies, the avoidance of birth defects, and the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of mental retardation and further studies of the delivery of health services, particularly the hospital/home interface at the time of childbirth.

Social and Rehabilitation Service (SRS)

The SRS legislative mandate directs that the research must be applied to the immediate needs of CSA (Children's Service Administration) and YDDPA (Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration). SRS research centers on child welfare studies of factors that predict the necessity for eventual removal of a child from the home, identification of specific problems that require such removal, and the kind of intervention needed to avoid removal. Their research will not focus on internal family systems. SRS is especially concerned with the research questions in Tables II and III that deal with the impact of environmental and sociocultural influences on families, with identifying factors that pull families together or keep them apart, and with the kinds of supportive services which would strengthen families or supplant them when necessary. A personal interest was expressed in increasing the synthesis and dissemination of research results presently available and thereby increasing the proper practical application of research.

Department of Labor (DOL)

The research emphasis at DOL is primarily the areas of welfare and work, not on the family per se. However, the agency is interested in the process of interagency research.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The research at HUD is not focused on the family, but rather on particular housing or urban studies related to specific problems.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

NIMH is interested in internal family systems as they contribute to the socialization and mental health of family members, particularly children. Studies of differences in various forms, lifestyles, and dynamics

of both healthy families and families with problems were suggested. Studies of ways in which external systems, particularly community institutions, can influence and reinforce healthy family functioning are important; for example, research on programs and services that could be added to existing institutions for this purpose is being conducted. Particular interest was expressed in the hospital/home interface and in education in parenting skills. Investigations of the various interactive sociological influences on child rearing and development are planned.

Maternal and Child Health Service (MCHS)

MCHS indicated interest in research on internal family systems as they relate to understanding the needs, attitudes, and practices regarding parenting performance, such as a study of the role of putative fathers in relation to unwed adolescent mothers and their children. Other questions of interest were how parents learn to act as parents, what sources of information are used by parents, and studies of values concerning sex education. Interest in research on the family in relation to external systems centered on improving methods of providing health services to families; for example, studies to identify institutional barriers such as discrimination and lack of availability that inhibit family access to services were suggested. Special health problems cited as areas for family-related research included: investigations of the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of families in regard to nutrition and the prevention or treatment of child abuse and learning disabilities.

National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke (NINDS)

The research of NINDS is focused on neurological disease or handicapping conditions. The agency is, therefore, interested in family-related

research that deals with the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of such conditions and with family attitudes and practices regarding a child handicapped by them. Studies include research on genetic counseling services to families to prevent these conditions, as well as research on environmental modification that could study effects of lead-based paint poisoning or poor housing conditions.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The Department of Agriculture's family-related research is conducted by their State Agriculture Experiment Stations. Research interest centers on the delivery of services to farm families, particularly through their Family Rural Development Program. The Program is designed to provide a wide range of services--medical, cultural, recreational, and nutritional. Research on the adjustment potential of the family, that is, what kinds of changes a family is capable of making and how to bring them about, is of continuing interest. The impact of economic shifts on the cohesiveness and continuity of families and studies of economic development are important research concerns.

National Institute of Education (NIE)

The primary family-related research concern of NIE is in the effect of the family/home on the child's learning, lifestyle, and future educational achievement. Research is planned on ways to support and help parents assume a more active and aware role in promoting their child's developmental progress. Such research could include studies of kinds and effects of parental interaction with the school and the determination of critical periods of interaction between the school, the child, and the family. Investigations of how parent behaviors are learned, how parenting skills may be taught,

and the impact of media and dissemination on families are related to supporting parental awareness of child development.

Additional research areas suggested were: (1) the impact on housing conditions, such as size of living quarters and crowding, on family interaction; (2) the impact on employment patterns, absenteeism, and turnover of providing day care services in various kinds of residential areas; and (3) the effects of varying degrees of involvement of children in family activities upon the value structure of adolescents.

60122

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE ON FAMILY RESEARCH

PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE ON FAMILY RESEARCH

May Aaronson
NIMH/Center for Studies of Child and Family Mental Health
Parklawn Building, Room 12C-24
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Carolyn L. Attneave
Harvard School of Public Health
88 Marion Street
Brookline, Massachusetts 02146

Barbara Bates
Office of Child Development
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Diana Baumrind
Institute of Human Development
Edward Chase Tolman Hall
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, California 94720

Susan Berresford
Ford Foundation
320 East Forty-third Street
New York, New York

Joseph M. Bobbitt
NICHD/Office of Planning and Evaluation
Building 31, Room 2A-22
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Robert Boger
Institute of Family and Child Study
College of Human Ecology
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

Stephen R. Bollman
318 Justin Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas 66506

Velma S. Brawner
OE/BOAE
Vocational Education Research Program
ROB #3, Room 5012
Seventh and D Streets, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Daniel G. Brown
Indian Health Service
1440 East Indian School Road
Phoenix, Arizona 85014

Susan Bucknell
Carnegie Council on Children
285 Prospect Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

Catherine S. Chilman
School of Social Welfare
Enderis Hall, Eleventh Floor
University of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Harold T. Christensen
Department of Sociology
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907

Ira H. Cisin
Social Research Group
George Washington University
2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

00124

Rosa Clausell
Early Childhood Program
Howard University
Washington, D.C. 20001

Betty E. Cogswell
Family Dynamics and Population Center
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514

Lois-ellin Datta
NIE/Career Education Programs
1200 Nineteenth Street, N.W.
Room 600
Washington, D.C. 20208

Elizabeth Y. Davis
USDA/CSRS
428W Administration Building
Washington, D.C. 20250

Madeline G. Dowling
SRS/CSA/WIN
Patrick Henry Building, Room 5122
601 D Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

Sigmund Dragastin
NICHD/ Growth and Development Branch
Landow Building, Room C-717B
7910 Woodmont Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Joseph S. Drage
NINDS/C&FR
Perinatal Research Branch
Federal Building, Room 816
7550 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Joan E. Duval
OE/Women's Program Staff
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Room 3121
Washington, D.C. 20202

Bernice T. Eiduson
Department of Psychiatry
Center for Health Sciences
UCLA School of Medicine
Los Angeles, California 90024

Lois Elliott
NINDS/C&FR
Building #36, Room 4A-23
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Martin Engel
NIE/Office of Teaching and Curriculum
1200 Nineteenth Street, N.W.
Room 816
Washington, D.C. 20208

Evelyn Fogarasi
Human Services Institute for Children and Families
1701 Eighteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

Ramon Garcia
Office of Child Development
Research and Development Division
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

D. Bruce Gardner
Child Development and Family Relationships
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Richard J. Gelles
Department of Sociology
University of Rhode Island
512 Chaffee Social Science Center
Kingston, Rhode Island 02881

Nancy Graham
National Urban Coalition
2100 M Street, N.W., Room 600
Washington, D.C. 20037

00125

Richard Graham
Harvard Center for Moral
Education
Larsen Hall
Appian Way
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Edith H. Grotberg
Office of Child Development
Children's Bureau
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Doris Hanson
Center for the Family
American Home Economics Association
2010 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Adele Harrell
Social Research Group
George Washington University
2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

Nancy G. Harries
USDA/Agricultural Research Service
Consumer and Food Economics
Institute
Federal Building, Room 339
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

Thomas W. Hertz
Social Research Group
George Washington University
2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

E. Mavis Hetherington
Department of Psychology
Gilmer Hall
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22901

Reuben Hill
Family Studies Center
University of Minnesota
1014 Social Science Tower
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Sheila Hollies
NICHD
Landow Building, Room C609
7910 Woodmont Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Mary C. Howell
Program in Clinical Psychology
and Public Practice
Harvard University
25 Shattuck Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

Maure Hurt, Jr.
Social Research Group
George Washington University
2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

Anita S. King
NIMH/Mental Health Services
Program
Parklawn Building, Room 11-101
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Lucie G. Krassa
USDA/Agricultural Research Service
Federal Building, Room 341
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

Esther Kresh
Office of Child Development
Division of Research and
Evaluation
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

00126

W. Stanley Kruger
OE/BESE
FOB #6, Room 2089G
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Luis M. Laosa
Department of Education
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024

Carl G. Lauterbach
School of Social Work
Marywood College
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18509

Phyllis Levenstein
Family Service Association
of Nassau County
SUNY at Stony Brook
5 Broadway
Freeport, New York 11520

Abraham Levine
SRS/Office of Research
and Demonstration
HEW South Building, Room 5412
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington. D.C. 20201

Mary Lystad
NIMH/Special Mental Health
Parklawn Building, Room 12C-09
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Robert McGee
Office of Youth Development
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Carol McHale
OS/ASPE
Division of Human Development
and Social Services
HEW North Building, Room 4550
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Margaret Mead
Curator Emeritus of Ethnology
American Museum of Natural
History
New York, New York

Donald Melcer
Institute for Family and
Child Study
Home Management House, Unit #2
Michigan State University
East Lansing. Michigan 48824

Leigh Minturn
Department of Psychology
University of Colorado
at Boulder
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Edwin Nichols
NIMH/Special Mental Health
Parklawn Building, Room 12-94
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Geraldine J. Norris
Bureau of Community Health Services
Parklawn Building, Room 12-05
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Ronald H. Ouellet
Social Research Group
George Washington University
2401 Virginia Avenue. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

Beatrice Paolucci
College of Human Ecology
Michigan State University
East Lansing. Michigan 48824

David Pearl
NIMH/Behavioral Sciences Branch
Parklawn Building, Room 10C-06
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

00127

Julie Phillips
NIMH/Center for Studies of Child and Family Mental Health
Parklawn Building, Room 12C-24
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

I. Barry Pless
School of Medicine and Dentistry
Rochester Child Health Study
University of Rochester
1545 Mt. Hope Avenue
Rochester, New York 14620

Craig Polite
Department of Psychology
SUNY at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, New York 11790

John Pride
HEW/Office of Human Development
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 5715
Washington, D.C. 20201

Duane Ragan
Office of Child Development
Family and Youth Division
P. O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Betty Rasmussen
OE/OPBE
FOB #6, Room 4094
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Carol Richards
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
P.O. Box 2316
Forrestal Center
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

Julius Rivera
Department of Sociology
University of Texas at El Paso
El Paso, Texas 79999

Mary E. Robinson
Office of Child Development
P. O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Nancy M. Robinson
University of Washington
5005 N.E. Forty-fifth Street
Seattle, Washington 98105

Saul Rosoff
Office of Child Development
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Robert G. Ryder
NIMH/Child Research Branch
Building 15K
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Patsy Sampson
NICHD/Growth and Development Branch
Landow Building, Room C717
7910 Woodmont Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Alice Y. Scates
OE/OPBE
FOB #6, Room 4079
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Alice Stubbs
USDA/CSRS
428W Administration Building
Washington, D.C. 20250

Cecelia Sudia
Office of Child Development
Research and Evaluation Division
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Marvin B. Sussman
Department of Sociology
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Stanley B. Thomas, Jr.
Assistant Secretary for Human Development
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
HEW North Building
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Deborah K. Walker
OS/ASPE
HEW North Building, Room 4546
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Joseph L. White
Comparative Culture Department
University of California, Irvine
Humanities Office Building, Room 234
Irvine, California 92664

Robert F. Winch
Department of Sociology
Northwestern University
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Marion R. Yarrow
Laboratory of Socio-Environmental Studies
National Institutes of Health
Building 10, Room 3D54
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

I. Roger Yoshino
Department of Sociology
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona 85721

00129